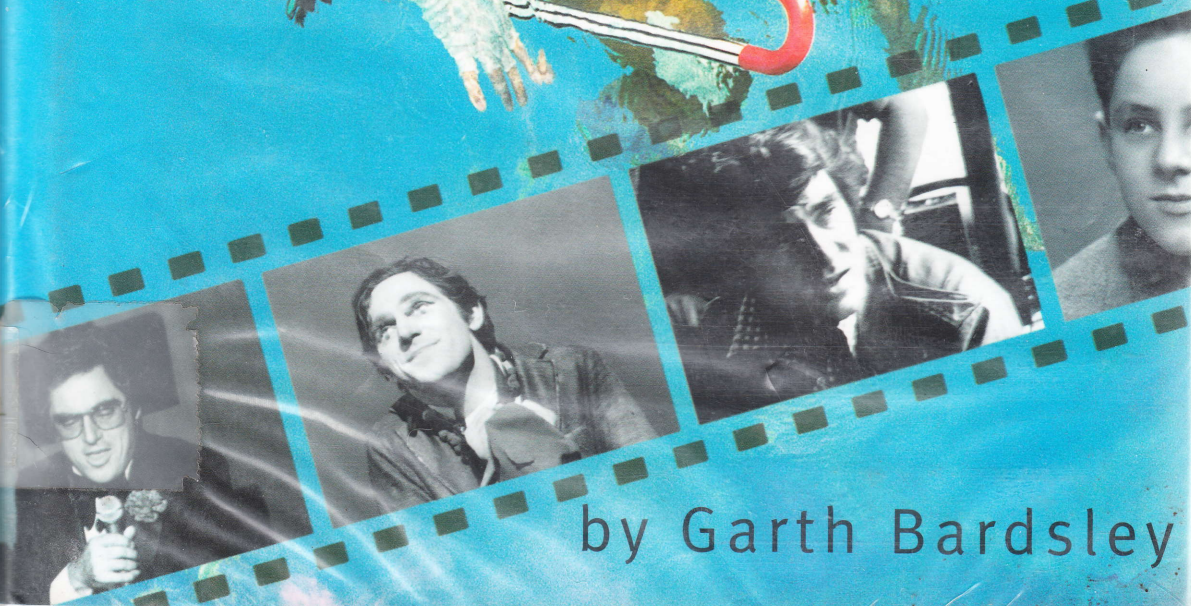


THE BIOGRAPHY OF
ANTHONY NEWLEY
STOP THE WORLD



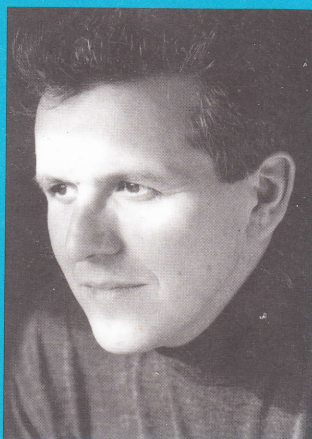
by Garth Bardsley

ANTHONY NEWLEY was one of the great all-round entertainers of our time, the star of many musicals, films and cabaret shows. From his early appearance as the Artful Dodger in the film *Oliver Twist* starring Alec Guinness and Robert Newton, Newley remained a favourite with audiences for over fifty years. His musical talents took him to the West End and Broadway in the groundbreaking show *Stop the World – I Want to Get Off*; to the top of the charts as a singer with hits like 'What Kind of Fool Am I?'; and into popular musical history as co-writer of such timeless songs as 'Goldfinger' and 'The Candy Man'. His marriage to Joan Collins grabbed the headlines amid the glamour of the swinging Sixties.

From his early days in the East End of London to his glorious nights topping the bill in Vegas, Anthony Newley was a man who gained the world. But behind the mask of success lay a fractured life: a man plagued with depression and self-doubt. In this extraordinary account of Anthony Newley's life, Garth Bardsley explores Newley's lifelong search for his father, his illegitimacy, the fortunes won and squandered, the wives and the lovers, and of course the films and shows – and reveals the Newley that few, if any, ever really knew.

£19.99

GARTH BARDSLEY is an actor, singer and director. He lives in Cheshire with his wife and two children. *Stop the World* is Garth's first biography.



Jacket design by Jon Morgan
Front cover main image: Terry O'Neill
Back cover painting: Sacha Newley
Author photograph: Karin Albinsson

Oberon Books

ISBN: 1 84002 274 4



Painting of Anthony Newley as Scrooge by Sacha Newley

Oberon Books

www.oberonbooks.com

ISBN 1-84002-274-4



9 781840 022742

STOP THE WORLD



Garth Bardsley
STOP THE WORLD

THE BIOGRAPHY OF
ANTHONY NEWLEY

WITH A FOREWORD BY LESLIE BRICUSSE



OBERON BOOKS
LONDON

First published in 2003 by Oberon Books Ltd.
(incorporating Absolute Classics)
521 Caledonian Road, London N7 9RH
Tel: 020 7607 3637 / Fax: 020 7607 3629
e-mail: oberon.books@btinternet.com
www.oberonbooks.com

Copyright © Garth Bardsley 2003

Garth Bardsley is hereby identified as author of this work in accordance with section 77 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. The author has asserted his moral rights.

Foreword © copyright Leslie Bricusse 2003

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not by way of trade or otherwise be circulated without the publisher's consent in any form of binding or cover or circulated electronically other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on any subsequent purchaser.

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library.

ISBN: 1 84002 274 4

Cover design: Jon Morgan

Front cover photograph: Terry O'Neill

Back cover portrait: Sacha Newley

Caricature: Jerry Weintz

Every effort has been made to trace the photographers of all pictures reprinted in this book. Acknowledgement is made in all cases where photographer and / or source is known. Some pictures from the Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University.

Proofread by Prufrock – www.prufrock.co.uk

Printed in Great Britain by Antony Rowe Ltd, Chippenham

IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER
LESLIE BARDSLEY
1934-99

CONTENTS

	FOREWORD <i>by Leslie Bricusse</i>	9
	Once Upon a Time	13
ONE	Typically English...	17
TWO	That's What It Is to Be Young	26
THREE	With All Due Respect	38
FOUR	I Wanna Be Rich	53
FIVE	It Isn't Enough	64
SIX	Gonna Build a Mountain	81
SEVEN	The Beautiful Land	99
EIGHT	Feelin' Good	117
NINE	Nothing Can Stop Me Now!	131
TEN	Chalk & Cheese	148
ELEVEN	I'm All I Need	160
TWELVE	The Joker	173
THIRTEEN	Showbiz Is My Life	188
FOURTEEN	What Kind of Fool Am I?	200
FIFTEEN	Who Can I Turn To?	210
SIXTEEN	Love Has the Longest Memory	221
EPILOGUE	What a Man!	233
	FILMOGRAPHY	235
	DISCOGRAPHY	237
	INDEX	239

He
of
ide
the
An
we
th
Br
G
ev
on

W
Sw
w
th
th
G
th
ro

tu
be
sh
liv
W
ex
w

h
w
or
T
d
th
h

FOREWORD

LESLIE BRICUSSE

HE WAS THE BROTHER I NEVER HAD. Writing together, we became the two halves of one person. Our talents and our spirits were in perfect synch. It was the ideal collaboration, because every day was pure joy. My wife Evie, who was there at the beginning and there at the end of my forty-year friendship with Anthony Newley, always knew when we were talking on the telephone or working together, because of the constant peals of uncontrollable laughter that punctuated everything we said and did. Evie was the third corner of the Bricusse-Newley triangle. We named the heroine of *Stop the World – I Want to Get Off* after her, and ‘Someone Nice Like You’ is Evie’s song. She understood everything about us both, she was our mascot and our inspiration and she and only she shared totally our sense of humour.

When Tony Newley met Joan Collins during the London run of *Stop the World* in 1961, the four of us embarked upon the best voyage through the Swinging Sixties that any four people on the planet, including The Beatles, who were our friends, could possibly have enjoyed. We were the right age in the right place at the right time. From our twenties into our thirties, from theatre success in the West End to Broadway success, and gold records and Grammy and Tony Awards in New York to Oscar-winning time in Hollywood, the Famous Four, as we modestly called ourselves, lived the high life and rode the big waves together.

How lucky could Tony and I be? – married to perhaps the two most head-turningly beautiful girls in the world, who gave us a glamour two poor London boys could never have imagined; scoring on all the biggest stages on the show business planet. It was unreal, except that it *was* real. The four of us lived together, played together, even started our families at the same time. When we could be, we were together all day, every day, and never tired of the extraordinary energy we created together. And we carried that golden time with us throughout our lives.

I think Evie and I knew every aspect of Newley better than any other two human beings alive, except, possibly, Amazing Grace, his phenomenal mother, who was our early years’ tea-making muse, because we knew *all* the aspects of his life and were *involved* in all the aspects of his life: the stage shows, films, TV shows, recordings, cabarets, the writing, composing, singing, acting, directing, the ups, the downs, the smiles, the frowns (sorry, Alan), the successes, the failures, the marriages, the children, the myriad women, the divorces, the houses, the settlements, the alimony, everything.

STOP THE WORLD

And we were there when it all started to go wrong. In the bizarre journey that was Anthony Newley's life, so lovingly and heartbreakingly detailed here in this extraordinary and definitive biography, there was a period of time, at what seemed to be the height of his career (and certainly *was* the height of his earning capacity), when everything appeared to be as good as it gets – except that it wasn't.

First and last, in my reasonably educated view, Newley was a man of the theatre – a *complete* man of the theatre who could have become a *giant* of the theatre. He was seldom less than good in films and on television, he was a dazzling cabaret performer, because that was live performance before an audience, but the very best of him was only seen on a theatre stage, playing a central starring musical and acting character-role that he himself had directed and helped to create.

Our collaborations – just five shows, *Stop the World – I Want to Get Off*, *The Roar of the Greasepaint – The Smell of the Crowd*, *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *The Good Old Bad Old Days* and *Peter Pan*, plus a handful of movie songs like 'Goldfinger' and 'Sweet November' – totalled less than either of us wanted them to, because when one of two writing collaborators is also the intended star of what they are writing, the actor's priorities necessarily change as the show is produced.

Newley starred in *Stop the World* for three years, *Greasepaint* for two, and *The Good Old Bad Old Days* for one during the first eleven years of our collaboration: over half the total time. It was hard for him to write when he was performing eight shows a week in the West End or on Broadway, or fourteen shows a week in a Las Vegas cabaret, so not unnaturally I went on writing and composing alone, because that's what I do and all I do, without him. And this had the happy by-product of providing starring roles for Newley in *Doctor Dolittle* and *Scrooge* among other things.

Gradually, from the early 1970s, I started to worry as I saw Tony following a path that I knew was wrong for him – the money trail – instead of the path that his manifold talents were meant to travel. And, when his Vegas bubble burst a few years later, he had nowhere to go. He never dealt with his financial life, brushing it arrogantly aside with remarks like 'Royalty never carry money, Brickman.' Broadway had forgotten about him, as had Hollywood and the film world. His recording glory days were long gone, and only fragments of TV and lesser ill-paid cabaret jobs were available to him. And somehow, unbelievably, hardest of all to understand, the millions had disappeared, too. He blamed alimony, but it wasn't alimony. It was the naive mistake of believing that the good times would never end, and allowing the money to spill away.

Our last collaboration was *Peter Pan*, starring Danny Kaye and Mia Farrow, in 1975–6, and apart from various revivals of *Stop the World*, starring himself,

FOREWORD

Sammy Davis Jr and others, where we adapted, updated or fixed a few bits, that was it. I never felt he wanted to do anything new again. It turned out that I was wrong.

He collaborated with the wrong person on a failed musical play about Chaplin, and at the end he was trying to climb an even bigger mountain alone, attempting to adapt Shakespeare's *Richard III* as a musical – a more daunting proposition than I would ever care or dare to undertake.

Luckily we were to reunite and collaborate one last time when he returned to the UK after his third divorce and an absence of nearly thirty years, in the early 1990s. I wrote and he starred, brilliantly, in my stage musical of *Scrooge*, playing the title role every season from 1992 to 1997, to my mind the towering acting-singing performance of his life, even more so than Littlechap in *Stop the World*, because of its greater and more serio-comic dimensions and demands.

One evening in his dressing room, before the show at the Dominion Theatre in London's West End, with his name finally back up in huge bright lights above the title where it belonged, he said to me,

'Brickman, do you know what the greatest regret of my life is?'

'No, Newberg. What?'

'That we didn't go on writing together.'

Mine, too, Newberg. Mine, too. It was so easy for us, and we did it pretty well, didn't we? The songs just fell on to the page, didn't they, one a day, regular as clockwork. Imagine how much more we might have done. Of course it's a shame.

You were a shining light in my life, and in Evie's life, and in the life of any audience lucky enough to have seen you in one of your great theatre performances. You were a total joy, a talent supreme, a friend beyond compare, and a total bloody idiot in the way you handled your life and your career. And you were the brother I never had... No, that's wrong. You *were* my brother.

Leslie Bricusse
London, March 2003

I
co
M
an
N
g
re
re
an
th
'N
q
fo
li
th
as
in
b
m
o
st
p
al
to
P
M
an
b
th
ag
to
T
G

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ONCE UPON A TIME

I FIRST MET ANTHONY NEWLEY in the autumn of 1994 when I joined the company of *Scrooge – The Musical* for that Christmas Season's tour and stay in Manchester. I was playing two parts in the show, Ebenezer as a young man and Scrooge's nephew, Harry, and so spent a good deal of time working with Newley on a one-to-one basis. I was immediately struck by his openness and generosity as an actor as well as his almost reclusive nature when out of the rehearsal room. On the one hand he was forthright and yet on the other removed. He frequently referred to himself in the third person, *Newley* this and *Newley* that, and although at first I found it odd, I began to realise that this was not affectation but perhaps a way of detaching that part of himself, 'Newley the performer', from 'Newley the man', which he considered to be quite separate. (I now believe that there were many more Newleys to be found between these two points.) As the season progressed I got to know a little of the man and determined that I should keep in contact with him once the show had closed. Over the next few years we corresponded and in 1997 I asked Tony if I could put together a revue of his music. He was keen and invited me to Esher where he greeted me with the famous Newley Hug, a bear embrace that quite simply made me feel alive. Over several months we met and chatted, but for one reason or another the revue kept being pushed onto the backburner. Finally in January 1999 *Chalk & Cheese*, a two-hander starring myself and Lyndsay Hamilton with Nathan Martin on piano, was presented at the Jermyn Street Theatre in London. By that time Tony was already ill and unable to make the performances. I sent a tape and the reviews to him in Florida. He wrote immediately to say he was thrilled; the show had perhaps cast a little light in the dark days of his illness.

The autumn after his death in April 1999, I was working with Sheridan Morley on a Noël Coward revue. We were swapping stories about Newley and lamented the lack of a decent biography. I sat on this thought for a week before finally summoning up the courage to suggest to Sheridan, via email, that I should be the one to write the book. To my utter astonishment, Sheridan agreed and immediately offered to contact Gina Fratini, Tony's last partner, to put the idea to her. A week later, in a restaurant opposite Her Majesty's Theatre (at the time I was playing the Phantom in *The Phantom of the Opera*), Gina listened to my thoughts on the proposed biography and gave her

unqualified support to the project, and my hopes began turning into reality. I then began a fabulous and life-changing journey during which I have been privileged to meet many extraordinary and fascinating people.

This book could not have been written without the constant support and love of my own darling wife and co-researcher, Fi, who has not only put up with my extended absences while I have been abroad or in the office but has also edited the manuscripts and helped to compile the index. My deepest thanks also to my mother, Alicia, and to Frances Mary and Haydn Christie who have helped in so many mundane but essential ways (free childcare for starters!). And thanks to my grandfather, Frederick Robinson who, sadly, has since died at the grand old age of ninety-two. I am indebted to Gina Fratini whose enthusiasm for the project has been a refreshing well from which I have regularly supped. Leslie and Evie Bricusse have also been an unending source of information and advice and I am especially grateful to Leslie for his personal and touching foreword. Heartfelt thanks too to Sheridan Morley and Ruth Leon for the use of their fantastic library and whose generosity and sound advice to this first-time biographer have proved invaluable. Mike Shaw and Jonathan Pegg at Curtis Brown have offered me much needed and much appreciated help and guidance along the way, and thanks of course must go to my publisher James Hogan, Dan and all at Oberon. Special thanks are due to Dr Richard Palmer whose humour and practical advice helped me to weather a particularly stormy patch.

I should like to thank Tony's family; his late mother, Gracie and his children Tara, Sacha, Shelby and Christopher; his uncle and aunts Winifred Cooper and Mr and Mrs Victor Newley; and his cousins Brian Addis and Pam Jones have all been more than helpful in the course of my research. I am especially grateful to Sacha Newley for the permission to reproduce his own magnificent portrait of his father playing Ebenezer Scrooge. Sincere thanks to Joan Collins, Dareth Newley and Ann Lynn for their help and to Dareth for her wonderful hospitality during my trip to Colorado.

I should like to thank Dr Howard Gotlieb and Sean D Noel at Boston University's Special Collections Department; access to the Anthony Newley Collection and permission to quote material has made this book possible. Our visits to Boston have been a joy and Fi and I are hugely appreciative of all the help we have received from everybody in the Special Collections department. I should like to thank those whose names have not been included in the narrative but whose insights into Newley have given me much to consider. Amongst these especially are Lorna Luft, Don Black, Nannette Newman, Alan Bergman and the late Sir Harry Secombe. Many thanks also to those who helped me in so many practical ways: the marvellous Jerry and Arlene Leichtling who took me into their LA home; Peter Tear, Kate Simpson,

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Glyn and Ann Bailey, Jennifer Sanchez and Dr R Strohm, who took care of me during various stays in New York; Judy and Max Bryer, AJ and Caryl Carothers, who made my visits to Las Vegas and Los Angeles respectively so much the more enjoyable; Paul Gilger for being the greatest of friends and a trustworthy sounding-board.

Back in England I am grateful to my much loved friends, including Jason Carr, Ben Cooper, Fiona Dunn, Simon Green, David Gould, Jamie Hayes and Andrew McGeachin who have helped in a variety of ways, from providing bed and board to arranging plane tickets (as well as putting up with my constant Newley-bound conversations), and special thanks as well to Newley's lifelong friend and latter-day agent, Peter Charlesworth.

I found the experience of talking to Newley's friends and colleagues profoundly moving and at times humbling. I shall not forget the kindness of all listed below and fervently hope that I have not forgotten anybody who deserves my thanks: Mike Atkins, Anne Aubrey, Burt Bacharach, Bertilla Baker, Tony Ballard, Billy Barnes, Peter Benda, Honor Blackman, Joyce Blair, Lionel Blair, Lloyd Bochner, Peter Bren, Bronia Buchanan, Lila Burkeman, Gerald Campion, Petula Clark, Ruth Conti, Ronnie Corbett, Judy Cornwell, Mary Crosby, Jason Culp, Irving Davies, Altovise Davis, Caroline Dawson, Chris Dee, Kenny Denton, Harry Dickman, Diana Darrid Douglas, Samantha Eggar, Mara Exton, Paul Farnsworth, Julian Fellowes, Sally Fincher, Bryan Forbes, Bruce Forsyth, Julia Foster, William Franklyn, Ian and Judith Fraser, Wendy Gadian, Sandy Gallin, Jez Gethings, Lewis Gilbert, David Gilmore, Rose Gramalia, Carroll Grevemberg, Joel Grey, Sir Alec Guinness, Buddy Hackett, Kenneth Haigh, Sir John Hannam, John Harrison, Doug Hayward, David Hemmings, Charles Humphries, Lionel Jefferies, Bill Kenwright, Alan King, Denis King, Rosalind Knight, Herbert Kretzmer, Christopher Lee, Jeremy Lees, Samuel Liff, Michael Lipton, David Lodge, David Lombard, Kenny Lynch, Gillian Lynne, Wendy McCartney, Johnny Mans, Bunny Pappas-Markowitz, Dick Martin, Lisa Martland, Ginger Mason, Hazel McCulloch, Master Mike McKenzie, Richard Mills, Julian More, Rhonda Muziani, Harry Myers, Bob Newhart, Terry O'Neill, Bill Ockleshaw, Dorothy Ohman, Jeff Overs, Toni Palmer, Suzie Plakson, Barbara Pulman, Anna Quayle, Herman and M K Raucher, Frank Rich, Brian Lord Rix, Danielle Robertson, Annie Ross, Herb Ross, Philip Saville, John Schlesinger, Anne Marie Schull, Robert Selby, Julian Slade, Gary Smith, Keith Smith, Michael Smuin, Kenny Solms, John Standing, Graham Stark, Neil Stevens, Julia Sutton, David Swift, Tony Tanner, Bob Tomson, Brenda Vaccaro, Dick and Beryl Vosburgh, Billy 'Bones' Vosburgh, Christopher Walker, Professor J Waxman, Jerry Weintz, Tony Wharmby, Gene Wilder, Anneke Wills, Sir Norman Wisdom, Aubrey Woods, John Yap, Bill Young.

STOP THE WORLD

Tony was a remarkable man. As a fellow actor he inspired me; as a friend he encouraged me and his interest in my own family was touching. I thank him above all for coming into my life and for (perhaps) allowing me to write his story.

G B

Audlem, Cheshire

March 2003

CHAPTER ONE

TYPICALLY ENGLISH...

HACKNEY MARSHES. A little piece of green and pleasant land breaking the relentless grey and red of wet London brick. Here the River Lea splits, to the north following its natural course above the marshes, and to the south channelled along the Hackney Cut Navigation. At Stratford Marsh, where the cut chases westwards to the Grand Union Canal, it separates once more and the two remaining streams meander around the Marsh until they reunite and drop down through South Bromley and Bow Creek to reach the contorted Thames at Blackwall. A shaft of green, blue and foam cutting through the overspill of East End London.

The Borough of Clapton, like neighbouring Hackney and so much of London, was, in the early part of the last century, grim and working class. Once one of the hopeful new Victorian suburbs constructed to offer escape from the filth and overcrowding of Shoreditch and the City, Clapton sank deep into disrepair as it filled with the unemployed and the human detritus of the First World War. Despite investment and new wealth, the poverty refused to budge.

Oswald Street embodied that poverty. A few minutes' walk from the waterworks that straddled the Lea on the Marshes, its houses were owned by landlords who were happy to take the rent but did little to maintain the buildings. It was a tough area, though dull rather than vicious. Along Oswald Street, children played in the gutter, barefoot and dressed in rags. The pawn shop saw a regular flow of suits and shoes, watches and cheap jewellery, allowing a few shillings each week against the rent or a little sustenance until the next dole payment. Yet with so many people in the same queues for bread and coal, a good deal of the daily pain was alleviated.

From the outside the houses seemed almost middle class, certainly respectable. The three storey buildings stood either side of a swept and tidy street. At Number 14, nine scrubbed white steps led up to an elevated front door that was rarely used. Another door with a string catch led off the street into the passage and from there into the kitchens and scullery. Beneath this was a small coal cellar. Dolly Blue lace at the windows of the house defied the darkness within. Inside it was miserable. Linoleum atop linoleum covered the floors and gas mantles offered a dim, guttering light. Candles were necessary for an ascent of the stairs. What little furniture survived was hard, ugly and

cold. The only running water was in the stone-floored back scullery where the tin tub hung on the wall above the already ancient gas stove. The outdoor privy sat beyond that, with the ripped newspaper offering little comfort but some brief reading matter. The front ground-floor room was the kitchen, where the range was kept burning, where warmth could be found along with the residents of the house. In between this and the scullery sat another kitchen which had been transformed into a workshop, littered with wood, tools and half-finished cabinets.

This was Oswald Street in 1931, where Frances Grace Newley brought her new-born son in September of that year. It hadn't always been like that; there was a time when life had seemed less harsh. Gracie's father, Arthur Robert Newley, a cabinet and birdcage maker (and according to family tradition descended from the Huguenots) owned his own business, and with his wife, Frances Grace Morris, and their young family, lived and worked in Brick Lane, off Whitechapel. He was a musician, a good oboist in the Reserve Forces Regimental Band and a keen amateur clog dancer with medals on his belt; she was an amateur dancer and singer whose brother, Bob Morris, was a sometime professional comedian, a regular at the Holborn Empire. At weekends, Frances would dress the children (Arthur, the first-born, Gracie, Adelaide, Edgar and Victor; six others had died in infancy) in their best clothes and they would go to Bethnal Green Park. There, seated at the front with ice creams in hands, they watched their father play in the band.

Things changed when Farrow's bank collapsed; Arthur senior lost a great deal of his money, and the onset of World War I put paid to any hopes of financial recovery. Arthur was called up, and sent as a regular soldier to South Africa. His first son and namesake added a few years to his age and took the King's shilling to join his equally youthful friends, an impetuous decision that would lead to his death from war wounds and tuberculosis some five years later.

With the men of the house away, Frances was left to try to sell the business and find a new home for her family. She was quite a beauty but, in the view of her eldest daughter, was a butterfly who should never have married. Once ensconced in Oswald Street, Frances took the eleven-year-old Gracie out of school and gave her the responsibility of looking after the house and children while she found other ways of supplementing the meagre soldier's pay. A child herself, Gracie soon felt the privations of the war, no matter how distant it may have seemed.

Frances tried anything she could to bring home a little more money, but for an experienced French polisher there was little work to be found. She became a bus conductor until, like so many women, she ended up working in the munitions factory. As war set in, life became harder still: without rations,

poverty was severe. Edgar and Victor soon became used to queuing and, on occasion, fighting for bread and coal. Their wait would end as often as not unrewarded. Arthur was rarely home and when he did return on furlough, it was only a matter of days before he would disappear again. Between 1913 and 1916 Mabel and Winifred were born, adding to the pressure on the family's finances in general, and on Gracie in particular. What she didn't learn at school, she learnt as she went along. Their indigent existence was not helped by their mother's behaviour. Frances and her sister could often be found at one of the pubs on Lea Bridge Road, sipping red biddy and shelling peas, the three-year-old Winnie sitting alongside, kept quiet by a constant supply of biscuits. Eventually, they would return to Oswald Street where they would continue to drink and dance. Gracie recalled that, although there were few men left behind, somehow her mother always found one or two to bring home.

As the deprivations of war bit deeper, even the fabric of the house suffered. 'There wasn't a chair or a table left and during the winters you went to bed with all your clothes on,' Gracie remembered. 'You couldn't get any coal, so my brothers pulled out cupboards and tore out anything they could get their hands on.' Towards the end of the war, Arthur was discharged due to his wife's failing health. He returned home to a house devoid of furniture, full of 'savage' children who were dodging the School Board Officer every five minutes and a wife who was dying of consumption. Frances died soon after his return, in St Joseph's Hospice on Wells Street, and the family, unable to afford a funeral, allowed the Parish to bury her in a pauper's grave. The little girl who had taken on the role of mother was now, most assuredly, the woman of the house. The years had come and gone and Gracie didn't even know how old she was.

With the return of Arthur, and perhaps in part due to the death of their mother, things began to improve for the Newley children. Although the family considered themselves Quakers, they turned for help to the Salvation Army, who quickly found furniture for the house and clothes for the children. They even managed to find Arthur some work and so the back kitchen became his workshop where he would sit up into the night to complete as many jobs as possible.

Gracie meanwhile worked equally hard as the children's surrogate mother. 'We were very poor,' Winnie remembered, 'and my brother will insist that he went to school in my mother's shoes. We never had table cloths, we had paper on the table. I don't remember us having a real Christmas; all I can remember is on Christmas Eve Gracie rushing out to get all the stuff in for a Christmas pudding for the next day. Gracie brought us all up, she worked very hard. It was bad but I think we were a happy family.'

STOP THE WORLD

All the children agreed that Arthur, or JanJan as he was known when the grandchildren began to arrive, was 'a saint' and he certainly had a calming influence upon his family, encouraging them to read and play instruments. He hardly ever raised his voice; rather, he cultivated a stable and caring environment for the children, exhorting them to 'always help a lame dog over a stile'. He was generous too, within the limitations of his pocket, often thrusting an extra half crown into the hand of one of the children on their way out for the night. The half crown was invariably returned at the end of the evening.

As the 1920s wore on, a little of the good fortune the Newleys had once enjoyed returned to their home. Warmth filled the house, and the yard out back became a tiny paradise of colour and scents, hollyhocks and foxgloves burgeoning beside the roses and lavender. Gracie, however, had little time to enjoy much besides her singing. She had joined the Salvation Army choir and was noted for her sweet voice, often finding herself singing the solos. She didn't have boyfriends. To all intents and purposes she was the mother of five children and her prospects of finding a beau seemed bleak. At the turn of the decade someone had taken an interest in her, but it was clear this was not going to be the great romance that she had longed for.

†

JanJan was ill and unable to leave the house, so Gracie went out to look for a suit for him. Oswald Street was only a few minutes from Chatsworth Road market, a pleasant walk up the hill and along the decidedly wealthier Rushmore Road. One of the stalls selling second-hand clothes was part of a business owned by Nell and George Kirby, run from their large house on Greenwood Road, just off Dalston Lane: a gentleman's outfitters that still passed on used items. Gracie went to the house and was met by Mrs Kirby. She told her what she was looking for and between them they found two suits for JanJan to try on at home. Later Gracie returned the unwanted suit to the Kirbys and agreed to pay 2/6 per week for the other. Each week she would return to make her payment and each week she would meet George Kirby. Some years younger than his wife, Kirby was by all accounts smart, intelligent, artistic and a charmer. Gracie fell in love. On one of her trips to the Dalston house, Nell asked her if she would like to work for them at the weekends, serving the customers and sorting through the bundles of clothes. Gracie accepted eagerly; she needed the money. She also needed to see George.

As the months wore on, Gracie and George became lovers and could be seen out together at the opera or theatre, Gracie radiant in her second-hand gloves and wrap. Back at Greenwood Road they would grab fleeting moments

together, exchanging kisses behind Nell's back. George helped Gracie to find a flat and for a few short months she was truly happy.

In February of 1931 Gracie realised she was pregnant. She kept it secret for a while, but eventually told George; he immediately told her to get rid of the baby. Alone one night, Gracie tried to do so, but with no success. The pregnancy continued. She left the Kirbys' business and thereby lost her flat. She then returned home, until it became all too obvious that she was carrying a child. For a time she stayed with a dancer friend but as the due date approached, she was forced to call on her brother Edgar for help. Convinced that the family would disown her, she implored him not to tell her father. Edgar, however, knew better. He arranged for his younger brother Victor to meet them at a tea shop on Mare Street. Victor was shocked and angry, more with Kirby than with Gracie. He went home to break the news to JanJan, who said, quite simply, 'Tell her to come home. This is her home.'

Gracie refused and remained with Edgar and his wife. In the autumn of that year they took her to Homerton Hospital up Marsh Hill, a sad and desperately poor institution which Gracie described as a workhouse. There, on 24 September, her son was born – not a big baby but, as Gracie said, big enough! Although she felt alone, one thing was certain: she was still in love with George Kirby. Kirby, however, was somewhat less enamoured. Before the birth he had sent his solicitors to visit Gracie. They had a proposition for her: if she would sign an affidavit stating that Kirby was not the father of her child, then he would be willing to 'set her up for life'. Again Gracie refused. 'He hadn't done anything for me up to then, and of course to be told that, after you had sacrificed everything for somebody you thought loved you...well... So I said, "Never. NEVER!" He didn't bother much after that.'

Gracie remained unconvinced that she would be welcome back at Oswald Street. Her sisters had been quick to accuse her of bringing disgrace upon the whole family. After another visit from Victor, who once again told her to come home, she agreed to go back, although not without trepidation. There, JanJan had fitted out the second floor front room for her and had made a cot for the baby. The deal was simple: Gracie had a home for herself and her son and in return she would once again keep house for JanJan and her two sisters, Mabel and Winnie. Once again she was the mother but this time it was for real.

While in Homerton, she had decided to call the child George Anthony Newley, the middle name after a character in a novel she had been reading. On her arrival home, however, it became only too clear how upset the family were, and that the name George would not be readily accepted. So it was just Anthony.

'We were all very shocked,' recalled Winnie, 'and we were called everything as we walked down the street. People crossed over. We were all ostracised for

a while until it blew over. After a time we didn't take any notice.' Nevertheless, as Tony's cousin Brian Addis noted, it was a terrible stigma for Gracie to have had Tony out of wedlock. 'Still, it was a bit of a joke that the street disapproved because we were at the posher end. At the other end of the street, they were Neanderthal types.'

Although Kirby no longer bothered much, his relationship with Gracie continued, with furtive meetings at the end of the street or in his car. Occasionally, they would have a proper date and then Winnie would be told to wait up for her sister. On returning at two or three in the morning, Gracie would run up the spotless steps and knock on the window to be let in. Then, for a brief moment, the front door would be pulled open before being quickly but silently shut. JanJan knew nothing of these meetings. Nor did he know that Anthony was taken to the park to meet his father or that Winnie would, from time to time, meet Kirby in the pub where he would hand over ten bob or a couple of quid for Gracie and the child. He could have afforded more but then there were other women. Gracie took what she was offered.

For another four years Gracie kept house and saw George: four years of deceit and secrecy that ended as painfully as they had persisted. When Tony had been born and the two had returned home from the hospital, her father had warned her that it must never happen again. 'But it did,' Gracie remembered. 'Once, when Tony was about four.' It was George's occasional habit to drive through the turning late at night in his car. Gracie would sit at her window waiting for the signal and then when the distant toot-toot of the horn broke the silence, she would rush out to meet him at the end of the lane. 'There, it all happened in the car.'

Once again, when Gracie realised she was pregnant, George reacted with callousness. But this time he arranged the operation himself, with a doctor he knew who had been knocked off the register for doing abortions. 'He took me to this terrible back room, laid me on a bed, done with me what they wanted to and said, "Now you can go home."' As she walked out of the room, Gracie noticed Kirby paying the man. He handed over a few coins, just enough, perhaps, to pay for a couple of pints of beer.

Grace knew that her family would not accept another pregnancy, especially if they knew who the father was. Frightened, and in considerable pain, she went home and waited. 'Of course it all happened at night-time and I was praying to God Almighty that my sisters wouldn't hear or do anything. I was so scared because I'd already disgraced them once. It all came away in one big bucket. It was very sordid. I was lucky to be alive.' After this, unsurprisingly, Gracie lost touch with Kirby.

Perhaps it was the disappointment of her relationship with George that made Gracie dote so on her child. There were men in Tony's life – JanJan who adored him and the somewhat sterner Uncle Victor – but neither could

be described as father-figures. Even in those first years it seemed apparent to her sisters that Gracie smothered the child, that she was 'too close' to him.

As the house emptied with the marriages of Auntie Adelaide (Addie) and Uncle Vic, the Newleys' poverty abated a little and there was always food on the table and books to be read. The 1930s seemed to pass in a cluster of cosy, smog-laden winters – Christmas tangerines in silver paper, market stalls with Naphtha lights glowing where gift-filled cotton wool snowballs hung. Then there were the pre-war endless summers, when the grass on Hackney Marsh would be cut and for eight long weeks Tony and his cousins could play in their piece of the countryside. They swam in the River Lea, up near the waterworks outlet where the yellow sticky foam signalled warmth, waves and bitter tastes. They climbed the trees and swung from the branches – Tony always a little afraid and ready to stop the game if it became too rough. He was streetwise up to a point but beyond that he seemed different. Brian Addis's sister Pam remembered him as dreamy, poetic almost. He called people 'flower', a curious expression at that time. 'He was different, not soft or silly. My brother Peter was a little street urchin, Tony was much gentler.' Tony *felt* different. He couldn't relate to his cousins easily and it seemed incomprehensible to him that he could have come from this family. There was a side to him that he kept from his family, certain that they were incapable of understanding him. This feeling that he didn't belong stayed with him throughout his life.

By 1939 JanJan was dead, both Mabel and Winnie had married and left the house and Auntie Addie, an amiable and kind lady, had returned with her husband Harry and their three children. Harry Addis was less than amiable and Oswald Street had been a happier place without him. Where he was short-tempered, Aunt Addie was long-suffering but always with a smile. Gracie now had a job as a barmaid at The Elephant public house on Mare Street and had started to see Ron Gardiner, one of the barmen.

With the outbreak of World War II, Tony's world was shattered. Only a few weeks into hostilities, it became apparent that the children were soon to be evacuated. To the eight-year-old Tony, along with so many other children, it seemed as if he were being punished in some way, abandoned even. He and his pal Joey Coram were sent to Sawbridgeworth, a small village some twenty-three miles north of Clapton in the Hertfordshire countryside. On arrival, the children were lined up and, as if in a schoolyard football game, were selectively chosen by the receiving families. Tony and Joey were billeted with Edith Chappell, an elderly lady who lived in an ancient two-bedroomed cottage. She made few concessions for the boys; they shared her bedroom and she would think nothing of stripping to her waist in front of them to wash. Tony came to despise this woman whom he considered callous and

mean, always ready to lash out and fill the boys' days with tedious chores. The schooling was strange, the surroundings stranger. He felt imprisoned and despite being so close to home he saw little of his family, especially his mother. This was to be his world for the next two years.

With Tony away from home, Gracie had more time to concentrate on Ron. He knew nothing of Tony just as Tony knew nothing of him. Ron was called up and went to Aldershot for training and on his return he asked Gracie to marry him. Victor insisted that Gracie should tell him about her son. Gracie couldn't. This was a chance she was not going to risk losing; someone wanted to marry her and at last she could give Tony a name.

The couple were married at Paddington Register Office in 1939 and some weeks later Ron, a Sergeant Major in the Catering Corps, was stationed in Troon, Scotland. Gracie joined him there and worked in the Land Army for the remainder of the war. As the bombing subsided in London the evacuees were returned home. If Tony had worried about being abandoned when he left, the news of his mother's marriage and subsequent move to Scotland increased that anxiety tenfold. Now he was motherless too and, without consultation or consideration, he was subsumed into Aunt Addie's family. A most intimate relationship had been broken and the devastation this caused in the mind of the young Newley would perhaps never be healed.

Before long the bombs began to fall again and once more the battered suitcases were packed and the brown-labelled children sent away. This time Joey and Tony, along with his much-loathed cousin Peter, were sent to Morecambe in Lancashire, an elegant seaside resort 255 miles north-west of London. However, what they found on their arrival there seemed to be something from a different planet.

George Cornille Pescud and his wife Belle, a hugely welcoming couple, lived in a large detached house in the town. It was light and airy, with a bathroom so big you could get lost in it. Pescud had been a professional music hall entertainer and at one time had been the actor-manager of an end-of-pier show. It wasn't long before he began to get the boys involved in reading, drawing and singing. Music and art were an everyday enjoyment, conversation was encouraged and songs around the piano and games of charades were a constant diversion. The walls were covered in paintings and there were books to be read, but most importantly for Tony, there were people he could connect with. It was as though a light had been turned upon him, allowing him to grow: 'For the first time in my life, here was a couple who sat down and talked to *me*, who listened to *my* thoughts and feelings.' Pescud talked about his career: a fabulous land of colour and light, of magical people and beautiful girls. Tony found himself wanting to emulate him. Here was a man he could look up to, a man he could admire, and perhaps the first man to

understand him. Tony was soon singing in the local church choir and at one Band of Hope concert he made his debut as a soloist. "O For the Wings of a Dove" wasn't the most stunning start but it encouraged me into a new world.'

The boys saw even less of their families and yet this time it didn't seem so bad. Indeed, why would Tony ever want this to end? What was there waiting for him in Clapton that could compare with this? The gasworks? The waterworks? The London grime and filth? The Newleys?

Gracie visited whenever she could, which wasn't often, and on one trip introduced Tony to Ron Gardiner. At first, Tony would have nothing to do with his new stepfather. Why on earth should he? He didn't need a dad and in any case he now had George. No doubt the ordeal was equally tortuous for Ron; he must have wondered whether there were other secrets that Gracie had kept from him. For that matter, he still didn't know how old she was. Over the next couple of years Ron and Tony were to become friends – almost – but one thing was for sure: Tony was not about to change his name to Gardiner. That possibility was discussed briefly, once and with finality.

When the time came for the boys to return to London, it was with mixed feelings that Tony boarded the train. He was leaving this paradise for a parentless home and a seemingly hopeless future. Would any of Uncle George's magic remain within, once Oswald Street had wrapped its grey, grim misery around him?

CHAPTER TWO

THAT'S WHAT IT IS TO BE YOUNG

AND GRIM IT WAS. The initial post-war euphoria had quietened amidst the devastation wreaked by Hitler's bombs. Oswald Street had survived unscathed, but all around there were wide-mouthed craters, each a surprised gasp against their uniform surroundings, each a gaping reminder of houses and families that had disappeared. To the young Newley there seemed little to celebrate amongst the playground ruins. Back at Number 14 he fitted in as best he could. Aunt Addie made it clear to the other three children that Tony was, until further notice, a member of their family and should be treated so: 'there were neither fish nor fowl but all the same.' The effect of another mouth to feed on the family's resources was not inconsiderable. Consequently, Tony found himself traipsing from one aunt to another for his various meals.

As he approached his fourteenth birthday, returning to school was not an option. Although he had tried to apply himself to his work at the Balmoral Road Senior School in Morecambe and his results had been good (he was placed second in a form of twenty-six) he was not interested in studying. His teachers were pleased with his progress but also complained of his inability to concentrate for any amount of time. He was frequently inattentive and often 'could do better'. Tony wasn't sure what he wanted but knew he couldn't face the drudgery of Mandeville School. With no obvious route to take, Aunt Addie began to search on Tony's behalf for any suitable office or factory apprenticeship. He moved from piano factory to gasworks, managing no more than a few weeks at each. Eventually, Addie found him a post as an office boy in a City insurance firm off Fleet Street, the first rung of a most respectable ladder. Newley was no more attached to this career option than any other but it was a way of passing the day and earning a few shillings before rushing home to his books and painting.

Walking along Fleet Street in the spring of 1946, he stepped inside the imposing entrance hall of the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper. He had wanted to ask the commissionaire about any vacancies but while he was waiting he read the classified section of that day's newspaper and noticed an advertisement:

BOY ACTORS WANTED, IMMEDIATELY, FOR FILM AND STAGE WORK
- MUST NOT HAVE AN ACCENT

Something clicked. Running to a nearby office where a friend worked, he borrowed some paper and begged a stamp.

It was with some apprehension that he opened the telegram that arrived for him the following evening. Telegrams only came when there was trouble. But this one invited him to attend an audition for The Italia Conti Stage School. The advertisement in the *Telegraph* had been a little misleading; they wanted students, not actors. After the war the entertainment world had suddenly blossomed: the arts needed people (just like every other British business). What had he to lose? Aunt Addie dressed him as smartly as she could and Tony presented himself two days later at 12 Archer Street in the heart of London's West End. The school was a tall thin building, squeezed into the cobbled street behind Shaftesbury Avenue; its entrance stood opposite the stage door of The Windmill Theatre, which housed a non-stop revue featuring nudes standing stock-still as other scantily clad girls wafted through the haze of blue smoke exhaled by the slumped raincoats in the auditorium. 'We Never Closed!' ran the post-war legend on the marquee. During their breaks, painted ladies wrapped in gowns and towels would pop out for a cigarette; across the road eager young eyes would devour these morsels of forbidden fruit.

Back in the school and to the left of the main door was a hall where the girls changed. Beyond that was a smaller room for the boys. A basement studio accommodated the tap and ballet classes, while singing and acting lessons took place on the first floor. At the back of the building were the school rooms for children under fourteen and above, on the top floor, was the Principal's office. It was there that Tony found himself, nervously reading a poem in front of Ruth Conti and the audition panel, trying to disguise the twang of his cockney accent. What he couldn't disguise was his joy when the panel offered him a place, to start the following autumn. But it was momentary: Miss Conti began to ask questions about his family's financial situation, since the course wasn't cheap and there were many extras to consider such as books, clothes and singing lessons. The fees alone were twenty guineas per term.

'Twenty guineas! We ain't got twenty shillings!' Tony exclaimed.

As he turned to leave, the panel huddled together and before he reached the door he heard Ruth Conti say, 'One moment, young man.' Newley turned. She told him that the panel was very impressed with his reading and felt that he had some talent. On this occasion, the school was willing to make a somewhat unorthodox suggestion. Inquiring how much he earned at the insurance firm, Miss Conti offered to increase his wage to twenty five shillings per week and in return Tony would be office lad and teaboy for the school. His salary would cover the fees, enabling him to attend classes as a student. Newley couldn't speak: he just nodded.

That, anyway, was how Newley in later life liked to tell the tale. In reality the story was a little different. 'Tony was never a teaboy. He never made a cuppa!! That is a myth,' Ruth Conti averred. The audition took place in the school's temporary home at the Mary Ward Settlement in Tavistock Square before its move to Archer Street the following September. She remembered Tony as small, with large eyes and a mobile mouth, and was indeed struck at once by his engaging personality and cocky cheerfulness. She told him she would take him on, provided he had speech lessons. Newley agreed and visited Miss Conti at her Southampton Row home each evening after he had finished work in the City. Conti found that his ear was so good and 'his bite so sharp, that Hey Presto! After two weeks he could speak with a good accent.' Tony was accepted forthwith into the school.

It was a disciplined environment which Tony found himself frequently rubbing up against, yet he loved it. A little of the world that George Pescud had described was now his own. He was surrounded by like-minded kids and beautiful girls and, best of all, here he could concentrate on himself, all of the time. The school catered for each student's requirements and would create bespoke timetables that took account of an individual's specific needs. Bianca Murray, once Noël Coward's teacher, coached Tony in acting and Ruth Conti continued to iron out the telltale sounds of the East End. A favourite at the time was his singing teacher Helen Vokes. A living reminder of the thirties (she had been a chorus girl in *Cavalcade*), Vokes was a sad character. Her son, Peter, had been killed in the war and she was forced to live in rented accommodation where she had to share a bedroom with another elderly lady. None of this seemed to dampen her considerable enthusiasm, though, and her pupils were devoted to her, not least Newley. She was not a teacher of technique but rather someone who encouraged the pupils to 'do their own thing', to find their own voice. In Helen Vokes, Tony found another mentor to succeed George Pescud.

Seeing that he was quick-witted but that his education was poor, Ruth Conti enrolled him at the Knightley and Trueman crammer in Holland Park in addition to his commitments at Conti's. Newley found this dull, preferring to play poker in the toilets or hang out at Taylor's café and, despite the frequent remonstrations of Miss Conti, 'he wasted the opportunities so presented. He had a great simple charm and looked angelic but he was a mischievous little boy and lacked discipline.' Some years later, Ruth Conti reflected that Tony's lack of a father along with the haphazard wartime schooling and evacuations did him great harm as a person.

Newley as 'teaboy' made another appearance in Tony's own description of how he came to land his first film role. Geoffrey Barkas, a veteran English movie producer, had been auditioning for some hours for a new Saturday

morning children's series called *The Adventures of Dusty Bates** and was no closer to finding a believable, streetwise cockney kid to play the title role. As Tony brought in a pot of tea, Barkas looked up from his papers, in despair of ever casting the part, and came face to face with Dusty. Barkas then asked who the teaboy was and whether he was available for work. He was, and Tony Newley landed his first role.

'The talk of the director saying, "Who's that teaboy?" is sheer rubbish,' declared Ruth Conti; but she conceded that it made a good publicity story. In truth, Tony was suggested for the auditions, along with other students, by the school's in-house agency which actively encouraged pupils to work while they were training. It was hoped that the agency's commission of fifteen per cent (and not the fictional salary of a teaboy) earned from any engagements Tony might secure, would eventually cover the school's expenses incurred by educating him. Come the casting, as Miss Conti recalled, 'he won the part with ease,' – undaunted, seemingly, by the responsibilities laid upon his young shoulders, Tony was more excited by the gastronomic delights on offer in the catering wagon and utterly fascinated by the thick orange make-up plastered onto his face each day.

No sooner had filming ended on *Dusty Bates* than Geoffrey Barkas offered Tony another role in a Children's Instructional Film called *The Little Ballerina*, directed by the young Lewis Gilbert. Before production started, Tony got his first taste of working in the theatre when he made his stage debut in *Winds of Heaven* at Colchester Rep. Back on the film lot, he was once again the working class, honest East End boy, this time adding a little colour to a bland girls' storybook concoction about a would-be ballerina. But it was clear that this boy was different. He seemed instantly at home in front of the camera and mature beyond his years. He was funny too. If he was somewhat 'soft' when it came to climbing trees and fighting with his cousins, then on screen he was fearless, a natural. Lewis Gilbert remembered him as 'a real little cockney kid and an outstanding child actor, an absolutely natural talent. He stood out immediately. You could see this boy would go far.' Some fifty years later he remarked that, had Newley been offered the part, he would have made a fabulous Alfie. Both *Dusty Bates* and *The Little Ballerina* were to be Saturday morning series but perhaps due to the presence of Leslie Dwyer, Margot Fonteyn, and the quality of Gilbert's work, the latter was released as a feature (through Rank). September 1947 came and Tony Newley was launched into

* The production was filmed at the Gainsborough Studios in Islington. The old power station had been turning out films for twenty-seven years and had seen the early creations of Hitchcock and Carol Reed but in 1947 it was coming to the end of its life and within two years it would be closed for good.

the nation's cinemas, to be seen by all ages. One day he noticed a copy of the *Daily Express* and was astonished to find a picture of himself as Dusty Bates. A year earlier he had been another office boy in another insurance firm; this was magic indeed.

In the early summer of 1947, Peter Ustinov cast Tony opposite Roger Livesy in his own remake (there had already been two silent movies) of F Anstey's much loved classic, *Vice Versa*. Tony had attended the audition for this in a suit bought by Aunt Addie from Tony's father, George Kirby, although, poignantly, neither father nor son were aware of the link. The plot of the movie concerns a pompous and wealthy stockbroker who comes into possession of a magical precious stone. On the day that his son returns to school, the father, holding the stone, casually wishes he could take his son's place. He is instantly changed into his own son. The son, in turn, grabs the gem and wishes himself into his father. Chaos ensues.

The role of Dick Bultitude would have presented a challenge to the most experienced of actors; for Newley the challenge was increased by the fact that he was playing so far out of character. Here was that cockney kid transformed into first a public school toff and then a fifty-year-old Victorian. Ustinov admired this precocious young fellow and was amazed at how convincing Newley was in the latter role. There were excellent performances too from Livesy, Kynaston Reeves and the then little known James Robertson-Justice. Playing opposite Newley was the considerably more experienced Petula Clark. Although slightly younger, she had already appeared in five films and had her own following in the music halls around England. Her father, who also acted as her manager, controlled her every move, vetting her friends and allowing his daughter very little freedom. It seemed to the young girl that everybody – especially Tony – was having fun except herself. Petula thought him cute, funny and talented. Mischievous, yes, but that was very attractive too: 'I thought he was amazing, dazzling.' During the next eighteen months, she and Tony would go on to make a further two movies together, although Petula's crush would remain unrequited.

Another cast member was the estranged wife of David Lean, Kay Walsh. Lean was at this time in pre-production on his latest Dickens adaptation, *Oliver Twist*, and was struggling to cast a variety of roles. One part he had tentatively cast was the Artful Dodger, having offered it to another East Ender, Alfie Bass (who was currently filming alongside Newley in *Vice Versa*). Walsh, who was to play Nancy, called Lean and urged him to see Tony. A screen test was set up and Newley landed the role and with it the possibility of a Rank contract.

Between filming and attending Conti's, Tony would return to Oswald Street where nothing had changed. His success had been noted and welcomed

by family and neighbours but Newley remained unfazed by his new-found status. Oswald Street was no more than a place to eat and sleep. It was around this time that he began to keep a diary. Within its pages he would write to himself, draw caricatures and experiment with ideas for plays and stories. He became fascinated with cinematography and would spend hours 'producing' screenplays. He was also discovering girls and they were starting to take notice of him.

He had grown used to living without his mother although there were occasional telephone calls and letters. Gracie was very much aware of her son's unexpected success, for Rank had approached her when seeking her approval for the contract that was now being discussed. She was aware, too, of the money he was earning. While filming *Vice Versa*, Tony received news that his mother was seriously ill in Scotland. After he had visited her, and after a number of consultations with the doctor, it was decided that Gracie and her husband should return to London. Ron had himself been seriously injured in a motorbike accident, and had been invalided out of the Army some months earlier. The couple returned and moved into the back room of Number 14. They were welcomed back, although Addie's family couldn't help feeling that there might be a reason other than Gracie's health. His cousin Brian recalled, 'There was a general feeling, rightly or wrongly, that she came back when Tony was successful whereas she hadn't been there when he wasn't. She wasn't considered a good mum by the family.' Pam agreed, 'Mum was there for him: Fron (Gracie) wasn't.' Tony, however, was pleased to have his mother home, even if that meant having Ron as well. At least now they might be able to move.

Oliver Twist was filmed twenty-five miles west of London at Pinewood Studios, and the shooting schedule was intense. For Tony to arrive at the make-up chair on time, he had to leave the house at 5:30 am. He would cycle to St Pancras Station, a good hour's ride, deposit his bike in Lost and Found and then take the train to Uxbridge. Another hour later and a few more pages of the script learnt, he would catch the bus for the twenty-minute ride to the studios. If he was to carry on working in the movies, they would have to move from Oswald Street. Once on the lot, Tony was transformed again. His luxurious hair was shorn close and much to Gracie's horror, Lean, unhappy with the neatness of the boy's face, pushed a walnut up his left nostril to distort his features. The effect was extraordinary and with Lean offering gentle suggestions rather than direction, Newley gave a remarkable performance. His leery Dodger equalled the power of both Robert Newton's Bill Sikes and the guileful intensity of Alec Guinness's Fagin. As Guinness recalled, 'We all thought he was very clever and would go far.'

Most of the make-up designs for *Oliver Twist* were inspired by the Cruikshank drawings that illustrated Dickens' stories and it was the faithfully

reproduced image of Fagin that prevented the film being shown in America for three years after its release in the UK: American Jewish groups felt that it would drum up anti-Semitism and pressured the Motion Picture Association of America to withhold its certificate. The extended debate that followed brought many Jews to the picture's defence but it was only after seven minutes of close-ups and profiles of Fagin were cut from the running time that the film was finally released in the USA in the spring of 1951.*

In 1948 Newley, still an undisciplined teenager, was often missing when his scenes were called. He was more interested in climbing up into the rafters or chatting with the crew than waiting patiently for his call. When he was on set, however, he was utterly reliable and whatever Lean asked of him, Newley provided. This was perhaps the best performance of Tony's life, a singular moment when his raw, unassailable talent was focused and tamed by a master of film. The 'natural talent' that Lewis Gilbert had noted complemented the unrelenting realism of the film; in many ways the Artful Dodger *was* Tony Newley. As Newley himself once said, 'With my background, an illegitimate cockney kid from the worst end of Clapton, I should have ended up as a small-time criminal.' The results were unquestionably remarkable and Newley's contribution was one of many that made the film great. But the extremes of his life had been widened; by day he was a respected young actor on a major movie, by night he was an East End kid who lived in a slum. It was difficult to find a balance.

On 29 January 1948 Tony made 'last minute preparations' for the premiere of *Vice Versa* at the Odeon in Leicester Square. He found the whole ordeal nerve-racking and was even more perturbed when the gathered spectators mobbed him. (This dislike of attending publicity calls never left him and throughout his life he always avoided crowds.) He returned home feeling less than elated and described the film as a nightmare throughout. The morning papers tended to agree: the film was 'too burlesque' and 'over long'. Ustinov conceded that it was perhaps too abstract for the tastes of the time but noted that it was one of those films which at once acquire a handful of fanatical addicts, who in turn serve to annoy even further those closed to its 'little mysteries'. The columns were also united in acclaiming a new star: 'This boy is a winner,' declared the *Daily Express* while the *Evening Standard* described Newley as 'an actor of quite exceptional ability who gives an astonishingly clever performance'. There were also plaudits from his friends and teachers but a gentle pull on the reins came from Ruth Conti. She was perhaps already

* It would be another nineteen years before the full version hit the screens of America when it was then suggested by New York film critic, Pauline Kael, that Fagin was more likely to offend homosexuals than any Jewish group.

aware of Newley's tendency towards indulgence and vanity. 'I want you to feel humble at the praise which you are now receiving on all sides,' she wrote two days after the opening, and then, with an uncanny prescience, 'You must know that your Mother's cup of happiness is full at present. Keep that thought ever in your mind for a mother is one's best friend who never fails you.' Her advice didn't stop Tony receiving a letter two weeks later from Conti's questioning his absence from classes. Nor did it stop him occasionally bunking off from the much dreaded personal appearances for *Vice Versa*. Those appearances were made slightly more bearable by the presence of Petula Clark and it was she that talked Tony into singing. 'We were sent out on publicity tours for *Vice Versa* and as I was a singer too, they always hoped that I would sing. Tony and I always appeared together, so I said "Why don't you sing with me?" He was very nervous but we worked out a little routine between us with him singing "People Will Say We're In Love" and he found that he liked it.' For Tony it was a relief to have something to hide behind, a small but lifesaving barrier between him and the audience.

Tony's reticence with live audiences did not characterise his attitude to girls. At Conti's he had met Jennifer Jones with whom he struck up a friendship. His infatuation intensified, earning daily entries in his diary: 'School - could think of nothing but Jenny, Jenny, Jenny,' and 'Her kisses prove that she must care deep down.' He was also fascinated by her middle class family and was delighted to know that her parents approved of him. It was in their company that Tony discovered he had 'a slight clairvoyant touch'. Handed objects from around the house, he would hold them to his brow and proceed to tell the story attached to them. Whether this was simply a ruse to impress Jennifer, the 'gift' left him once their relationship came to an end. Although he described himself as very shy, this was only evident when he was with complete strangers or in front of an audience; amongst his own he was often the centre of attention, and in his own words, 'making delightful conversation' and 'keeping the whole room in fits'. However, Newley's interest in Jenny did not stop him looking elsewhere and within three weeks of his declaring his love for her, she gave him an ultimatum: to keep to her or not at all. He chose the latter, a decision which provoked this entry in his diary the following day: 'What a world, so full of doubts and sorrows, rife with greed and lust for...destruction, misery; a collection of sordid exhibitionists.'

Newley, like any young man (though perhaps a more assiduous student than most) was creating himself, choosing his wardrobe and fashioning his handwriting. He was also discovering the world around him. 'I visited Hyde Park Corner this evening and what I saw shocked and surprised me. This famous spot known throughout the world as "the common seat of free speech" has turned into the even "commoner seat of prostitution".'

Earlier that year Gracie and Ron had found a flat in Highbury Barns and the family moved there on a foggy February morning. Tony hated it at first. Highbury was full of drunken Irishmen and the small, ugly flat was on the top floor, six steep flights up. Worse, through the sliver of wall he could hear the man he called Dad making love to his mother. Gradually he settled in and later wrote, 'I love our new home although it's not as grand as I hoped it would be.' It was one step away (if not up) from Oswald Street and at last Tony Newley had the semblance of a normal family life. Although throughout his life, Tony stayed in touch with his family, among his cousins there was a lingering resentment of his behaviour towards their mother, Addie. As Brian commented, 'We never thought that he treated her as well as he should have done. He would send her a signed photo with a note on it and a bunch of flowers if he remembered, but putting ten quid into a post office account each week would have made a lot more difference.' And Aunt Addie minded: she never expressed it harshly, she wasn't broken-hearted, but she did mind.

Money was still tight. Tony's earnings were few and far between and Ron brought in little as a barman. What he did bring home was rarely passed on to Gracie. Before long it became a matter of urgency for Gracie to find a job too: she went out charring and took in washing – coloured shirts for fourpence ('you'd get a nice collar and cuff for that') and sixpence for a white shirt. The draped and steaming laundry filled every room in the flat, much to Gardiner's annoyance, while Gracie's tiny frame, hunched over the ironing board, wrestled with the tangled mound of damp sheets.

Ron Gardiner had little time for Tony's thespian ambitions and chided Gracie for 'killing herself' day and night to keep the boy. Tony attacked her from the other side, reproaching his mother for not forcing Ron out so that he'd have to find a job. When Tony came home late to find his mother still washing, he would promise her that one day this would all be finished and she need never iron another shirt. But his own spendthrift manner did little to help. Ruth Conti was conscious of his profligacy and kept back a pound a week out of his earnings for Gracie to collect from Archer Street.

By the end of filming on *Oliver Twist*, Tony had secured a seven-year contract with the Rank Organisation. However, any expectations of another role like the Artful Dodger were not to be realised. Indeed, what should have propelled the young actor forward seemed to slow him down. After a brief sojourn with Pilgrim Films as another schoolboy in Roy Boulting's *The Guinea Pig*, starring Richard Attenborough, Tony returned to Rank to play the smallest of roles in the second of Ken Annakin's three Huggett movies, *Vote for Huggett*.*

* Petula Clark co-starred as Pet Huggett alongside Susan Shaw, Jack Warner and Kathleen Harrison in all three *Huggett* movies. The series was a spin-off from another Ken Annakin film,

Things improved with his next two parts. Charlie Ritchie in *A Boy, a Girl and a Bike* equalled the Dodger in screentime and was reminiscent of that character, but the movie, set in the magnificent Yorkshire Dales, mainly concentrated on John McCallum, Patrick Holt and the girl in the middle, Honor Blackman. In the limp but curiously appealing comedy *Don't Ever Leave Me*, Newley played the precocious tearaway Jimmy Knowles opposite Petula Clark's feisty and almost sexy Sheila Farlaine. Neither of these roles was a challenge for Tony but there was much to be learnt from working with some of Britain's finest actors, including Maurice Denham, Thora Hird, Jack Warner and Kathleen Harrison. He was also coming into contact with girls – and one girl in particular. Diana Dors stood out amongst her peers; how could she not? Her short-clad curves had been the main attraction in *A Boy, a Girl and a Bike* and in *Oliver Twist* she played a slatternly but alluring Charlotte, oozing sex appeal with every swish of her skirts. She was everything forbidden and all the more desirable for it – womanly beyond her years and truly adorable. Like so many men after him, Newley fell madly in love with her. His feelings were requited to a point: Dors allowed his affections into her bedroom if not her heart.

By the summer of 1949 Newley was marking time. Although he was still a student at Conti's he was rarely seen at the school and when he did attend his work was unremarkable. There was little doubt amongst his tutors that he had a very real and natural ability; nevertheless, Ruth Conti wrote in his last report that he lacked application unless he had individual attention, 'which is a pity'. He was also given to mannerisms, 'which he must check as he is inclined to display them whatever the part he is playing'. Even his singing lessons had lost their appeal. Helen Vokes commented that he would have a charming voice if he worked harder and took time to learn his songs from memory.

Newley was miserable, his frustration evident in the purple entries in his diary: 'What a farce this all is, this fairytale-cum-nightmare called life. This waiting room of death, what fools, what utter, stupid, irrational, ignorant fools we mortals are. Like so many bees around a hive, each getting in each other's way, fighting, spitting, loving... Death grinning like a cracked pitcher watches our feeble efforts at survival with the assured expression of a fisticuffs promoter – either way he wins. Who knows what is beyond the grave – who cares, surely God would not torture us with *another world*.' Reflecting upon his life so far as only Newley could, he even jotted down some titles for his autobiography which included, *I Never Left Home*, *All That I Did Possess* and *Eve, The Apple and Me*, all of which might have been appropriate if he had put

the 1947 comedy *Holiday Camp* in which Mr and Mrs Huggett had first appeared, and proved a hit with audiences.

STOP THE WORLD

pen to paper in his latter years. With little to do he began to write a screenplay based on his own life, entitled *The Sound of Violence*, which never saw the light of day but was the first sign of Tony's need to write about himself. It was as if the jumbled feelings and thoughts in his head could acquire some sense when written down. The play focuses on an illegitimate boy named Harry and his reaction to his mother bringing a new man into the home.

HARRY

How do I behave? Do I shake his hand, kiss him on the cheek? I don't know what to do.

The mother, Grace (other characters include Addie, Pam and Peter), even comments on Harry's true father:

GRACE

He gave me Harry, I'll always love him for that.

Wishful thinking, perhaps, on Tony's part but it was clear that he was keen to discover who and where his father might be. It was also clear that he felt he could not ask his family for help. Convinced that the man had died in the war, Tony went with his Conti friend, Jeremy Lees, to Westminster Abbey to search in the books that listed those lost in the conflict. They couldn't find George Kirby.

At Rank, the only offer on the table was to play an unnamed character in David Lean's *Madeleine*, a one-line part that anyone could have stumbled through. The seventeen-year-old's nasty feeling that his luck had run out was brutally confirmed when Rank dropped him. Newley put this down to his being found during a Rank Organisation cocktail party under the grand piano with Diana Dors when he should have been pressing flesh elsewhere with the guests and dignitaries; the security staff escorted him off the premises and Rank cancelled his contract. It was the latest in a line of foolish indiscretions that had marked Tony's time with the company and it is possible that Rank saw it as the easiest excuse to rid themselves of a somewhat troublesome actor and save money. For in 1949 Rank Films were in debt to the tune of £5,000,000, mostly due, as J Arthur saw it, to the forty per cent Entertainment Tax 'ruthlessly seized' by the British Government. In the same year Rank sacked over a third of his workforce and sold both his Shepherd's Bush and Islington Studios. Newley was only one of thirty-three established actors, including Stewart Grainger and Claire Bloom, who left the Rank stables that year. Diana Dors stayed on.

The flat in Highbury Barns now seemed even more depressing and there was very little money in the pot. Gracie was increasingly dependent upon the little extras that came from her clients in the form of tins of soup, loaves of bread and the like. The auditions continued but Newley failed to impress. He was no longer that little boy in *Vice Versa* and *Oliver Twist*, nor was he yet a man. It seemed he would have to start again. This he was ready to do if only someone would give him a chance. Gracie would give five shillings to Tony whenever he had a casting to attend with the request that he might not spend it all and perhaps bring some home. There was rarely any change from his trips into town and on more than one occasion Newley himself would fail to return. As the last bus pulled up at the stop opposite the flat, Gracie would stand at the window to see if he was on board. If he wasn't, then she knew that it was only a matter of time before the police would call informing her that once again they had her boy, would be sending him home in a taxi cab and would she pay the fare at the other end? Gracie would say yes and take her rent-filled purse downstairs to wait for her drunken son's return. 'That happened so often. He was a good boy though, he never got into any real trouble.'

In the autumn of 1949 Rank offered Newley a featured role in the Ealing comedy *Dance Hall*, playing Petula Clark's boyfriend. She was excited: 'I thought how lovely and romantic, we would get to have a kiss.' Tony was also excited as Diana Dors too had been cast; perhaps they could continue where they had left off. Before any contracts were signed, the part was taken away – not by Rank this time, but by an offer Newley couldn't refuse: National Service.

CHAPTER THREE

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT

IF NATIONAL SERVICE WAS an 'organised waste of time' for many of the young men that were called up, for Newley it was an organised nightmare. Arriving at Aldershot in late winter, he felt utterly lost, cut off from everything he knew. He despised the regime and found it difficult to relate to his fellow soldiers. Even the companionship of his Conti friend, Jeremy Lees, did nothing to ease the terror that Tony felt. Once again he was back in a game that was too, too rough. In every way he was out of his depth. There was nothing of it that attracted him and there seemed nothing of him that could accept this way of life for the next two years. The discipline alone he found unbearable. Tony's concept of punctuality was not to be more than two hours late; having had no real discipline at home he found it impossible to respond positively to the barked orders of a Sergeant Major. None of it made sense and he didn't understand how to respond.

The young men who arrived at the Holding Platoon, Parsons Barracks, had been approved for National Service by a Governmental Civil Office rather than the Ministry of Defence, and were now processed by the Army to decide where each would be stationed. The medical status of each soldier was assessed under the imported Canadian PULHEEMS system: **Physical capacity, Upper limbs, Locomotion, Hearing, Eye, Eye, Mental capacity, Stability.** All were graded from the optimum one down to ten. There was no doubt that 22312441 Private Newley A could pass all with reasonable ease, but that was not going to happen. It was the little things that his fellow soldiers noticed at first: the capless, left-handed salutes he would give his superiors; the way he was 'nicely insubordinate' so that one was never sure just how unruly he was being; the hand-on-hip poses that suggested he might be a little too fey to be considered suitable for His Majesty's Armed Forces. And then there was the downright obvious, such as the message he pinned to the general notice board addressed to himself and Private Lees which read: 'Fed up, fucked up and far from home, here lies the body of Private Newley. Sir!' Some six weeks after his arrival, he was released from the Army on the grounds of mental instability, having received eight out of ten in that section of PULHEEMS.

'I couldn't take a man's world,' Newley said. 'I need a woman's presence and touch.' Brian Addis was not surprised: 'He fiddled the army. It was horrible for him; he really didn't like that harshness. He probably did non-stop crying

or something.' During this brief but traumatic period, Tony kept in touch with a man he had met some months earlier. Michael Jackson had first written to the sixteen-year-old Tony after he had seen him in *Oliver Twist* and they had subsequently struck up a close friendship. By 1949 their relationship had become intimate. Jackson referred to Tony as 'Dearest Boy-boy' and in a letter of December 1949 he wished that Tony could spend the night with him so that they could lie awake in bed talking for as long as they felt like it. The letter closed with, 'Bless you my love.' Newley visited Jackson on his weekend release early in 1950 and it was to Jackson that he turned, distraught and depressed once he had left Aldershot. The older man didn't fail him. He provided Tony with a rent-free flat of his own at 6 Roland Gardens in South Kensington, a two-minute walk from his own flat in Milborne Grove. He also provided financial support for the young actor whose career had all but stopped.

Newley made only one film that year. Rank's *Highly Dangerous* saw his character come and go in the first ninety seconds of the movie: he wasn't even credited. In his personal life he was losing friends as fast as he could make them and he even bit the hand that fed him. Jackson became aware that Tony, when speaking to mutual friends, had been less than generous in his comments about the older man. He wrote to Newley that spring, saying that his behaviour in general and towards him in particular had been pretty disgusting. He reminded his young friend that the lease of the flat was due to expire on 21 April and that, as promised, he would furnish him with a home until then unless he heard of further abuses of his kindness. After this date Jackson asserted, 'I shall neither be able to nor will I provide you with a home - you must take over the responsibility of looking after yourself.' Jeremy Lees believed that the whole relationship was one of financial necessity for Newley: 'He was broke at the beginning of the fifties. It was a matter of total convenience.' Newley, however, felt differently and made amends with Jackson. They would remain good friends for years to come.

Desperate to earn a living and to fend for himself, Newley was open to any ideas and it was Diana Dors who was next in line to offer some help. She and Newley had been seeing each other on a casual basis but it had been clear to him for some time that he was nothing more than a distraction to her. All the same, he and another admirer of hers had resorted to fisticuffs some months earlier, after the latter had turned up at Newley's apartment in the middle of the night to warn him off. One of her other boyfriends now suggested that Newley could help him with a little business proposition which might suit the out-of-work actor. If Tony would impersonate a door-to-door perfume salesman he could earn a pound a day. The scam failed before it had properly begun and the fear of a run-in with the law deterred Newley from any further dubious ventures.

As work continued to pass him by, Tony began to drink heavily and became increasingly despondent. He developed a stomach ulcer and started to be less fastidious about his looks and clothes. He was once again heavily dependent upon his mother, and for the first time in his short career, he was beginning to doubt his abilities as an actor. It came as both surprise and relief, then, when in January 1951 Dorothy Mather at Film Rights Ltd offered to represent him. It was clear that Bevan Williams at Conti's agency was doing nothing for him now, and Tony jumped at the chance. However, it was Ruth Conti herself who came to the actor's aid after Tony had visited her some weeks earlier and complained about his lack of work. Within a few weeks of a promise to help she had managed to secure him a contract for the year's repertory season at the Empire Theatre in Dewsbury, West Yorkshire.

The Empire was one of England's largest and most well equipped regional music halls. It had opened in 1909 and in its heyday had attracted the likes of Flanagan and Allen, Gracie Fields and Frank Randle. Randle was so popular that on his opening night there in 1932, three thousand people crammed into the sixteen-hundred seat auditorium, bending the girder that supported the gallery in the process. And in 1951, the theatre still managed to attract a healthy following. Whatever reservations Tony may have had about leaving London for the rest of the year, he knew he could not afford to be choosy and besides, if Dewsbury was good enough for Charles Chaplin...

The Saxon Players were the Empire's weekly repertory theatre company. They played six nights and a Saturday matinee each week and the actors rehearsed each subsequent production during the day. The company (which included Richard Vernon and Dinah Sheridan) performed some twenty-five plays between March and November and offered a highly varied theatrical bill of fare ranging from Agatha Christie to Sheridan, and Ronald Gow to Tennessee Williams – not all of which was appreciated by the Dewsbury public. *Charley's Aunt*, in which Tony played Jack Chesney, was lapped up, whereas the less familiar and considerably steamier *A Streetcar Named Desire* attracted loud hissing throughout. With the relative security of £12 a week, Newley settled into Yorkshire life and began to regain his confidence. He enjoyed the challenges that the diverse selection of roles afforded him – one week he might be playing Moses in *The School for Scandal* or Gerald Popkiss in Ben Travers' *Rookery Nook*, the next saw him on stage as Peter Gay in *The Seventh Veil* or Mitch in *Streetcar*. He played an active part in the local community too, cutting ribbons and crowning May Queens, and would say later that his time at the Empire and the warmth of the Dewsbury people reawakened his desire to be an actor. The manager of the theatre was an expoliceman called Terry Cooke. He took a great interest in Newley and later that year became his personal manager, looking after Tony for the next ten years. Visits from Jeremy Lees brought news from London and the two friends

spent lazy Sundays with their girlfriends, identical twins Patricia and Helen. Newley wasn't short of admirers amongst the locals and he enjoyed to the full his re-found fame – fame that is within the environs of West Riding.

Returning to London in 1952, Newley was once again out of work and once again he began to let himself go. Had Dewsbury really happened? Dorothy Mather wrote to him saying that she was not being very lucky about placing him. It seemed to Newley that he couldn't get arrested, let alone 'placed'. The year wore on with little for him to do other than watch the girls dancing at Conti's and drink with his friends. A year in rep at Leicester was offered but Newley couldn't face another long period away from home and despite the lack of interest in him, he was determined to get back into films. His patience paid off. Towards the end of the year he landed a supporting role in John Paddy Carstairs' *Top of the Form* alongside Ronnie Corbett, Alfie Bass, Harry Fowler, Gerald Campion and a host of other twenty-somethings masquerading as fifteen-year-old schoolboys. Ronald Shiner, Newley's co-star from *Dusty Bates*, played the bookmaker turned headmaster in this remake of the 1937 British comedy, *Where There's a Will*. Immediately after that came another small role in *Those People Next Door*, playing the working class son of Jack Warner and Marjorie Rhodes.

With his first film credits in two years he felt that he was back in the game he knew something about. This much needed fillip inspired him to start writing again and he began work on a number of revues under the pen-name Oliver Clapton. His first was a small-scale musical entitled *Our Man Townsend* which was performed by Italia Conti students and one or two of Newley's friends at the Irving Theatre in July 1952. Newley wrote, designed, lit and produced the show and also managed an appearance towards the end of the piece as The Cleaner. (The tendency to have a finger in every pie never left him and in later years would develop into something akin to control-freakery.) The subject matter was highly political, concerning a communist state in the UK, and the script made reference to Scottish home rule, Irish Partition, the suffragettes and the struggles of the working class man. One of the main characters was an illegitimate boy who had been cared for by the Salvation Army. Newley also composed the songs and one, 'The Open Boat Song', with its lilting lyricism, showed something of the young writer's life-long quest for self-knowledge:

A man can wander like an open boat
But he must have a star that'll guide him.
He can stay out nights like the canine breed
But even a dog must have a lead.
Oh, a man can wander like an open boat
But he must know the way in his heart.

STOP THE WORLD

In addition this burst of creative activity led Newley to start a double act with the writer and comedian, Dick Vosburgh. Vosburgh was enthusiastic about Tony's talent and it saddened him that Tony was so often passed over for other, lesser actors: 'He wasn't working much, he would suddenly get a small nothing type part for a couple of days, which I thought was ridiculous.' The original idea for their act was based on material that Vosburgh had previously written when he was a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Leslie Crowther had originally been set to be part of the team but sudden film success had removed him from the act. Newley and Vosburgh performed the routine to captive audiences at various institutions including one home for the blind. Vosburgh recalled,

We thought they were deaf, too, based on the laughs we got. They were odd as well. Tony whispered to me, 'I don't like these people, make these awful people go away.' I said, 'I know, they've all got such shifty eyes,' which was such a horrible, bad taste thing even to whisper, that it broke him up. I was afraid he was going to share it with them, he found it so funny.

That summer, the duo finally got a break when they were asked to audition for the BBC Radio show, *Midday Music Hall*. On a particularly hot day, they made their way to the BBC Variety Department on New Compton Street to meet one of the show's producers, Trafford Whitelock. It was so balmy that Whitelock decided to audition them on the baking hot roof of Aeolian Hall. In Whitelock's considered opinion the act was only half-decent and that half didn't include Tony. Whitelock called Vosburgh and offered him, and him alone, the spot on the show. Towards the end of their conversation, Whitelock suddenly said, 'Tell me, who was that common boy you auditioned with?' Vosburgh was dumbfounded both by the question and the silence he received when he answered, 'That was Tony Newley! The Artful Dodger!! *David Lean*?!!!' Vosburgh went on *Midday Music Hall* twice as a single and although the double act was finished, his and Tony's friendship endured, even when faced with the culinary disasters of Dick's wife, Beryl. At one supper, faced with Mrs Vosburgh's shoe-leather steak, Newley commented that he'd have to send out for a new set of sharpened teeth.

Newley continued to play the field where girls were concerned. He had started to see a young girl called Mary Selway. Her father was furious. He began proceedings against Newley through his solicitor. Initially Newley stood his ground, but a letter from his own solicitor arguing that the father's feelings were completely justified, along with the added threats of physical violence from the father, persuaded Newley to keep away from the girl.

With work still in short supply, Tony looked around for somebody other than himself to blame, the obvious choice being his agent. He wrote to Dorothy Mather, complaining of her lack of interest in him and his career. Mather replied immediately and succinctly, 'Please don't write silly letters to me or one day I may get cross.'

Sitting with a girlfriend in Le Grand coffee shop on Lisle Street one day, Newley encountered a pretty girl as she approached his table. Something about her struck Tony as interesting. She appeared slightly at a loss for words but asked his companion, with whom she was clearly acquainted, if she would look after her bags? Depositing her packages, she then turned and left the café. When she returned Newley asked her out.

Ann Lynn was an eighteen-year-old actress who had been in love with Tony Newley ever since she had first seen him on the screen in *Vice Versa*. She was so overcome at seeing him at Le Grand with a friend of hers that she had to go for a walk around the block to calm her nerves. Such was her infatuation that once they began dating she turned down work that would take her away from London. This included the tour of *Dry Rot* for Brian Rix which she had only just accepted. Their relationship was immediately passionate and unpredictable and it certainly differed greatly from any affair Tony had had before. Ann took care of Tony. She supported him and encouraged his work and she believed fervently that they should be 'acting to change the world'. Acting to earn some money would have satisfied Tony. Within weeks of their first meeting, they moved into a tiny top floor apartment together.

It was the spring of 1954 before another film role came Newley's way. John Paddy Carstairs cast him, along with the majority of the actors from *Top of the Form*, in his British Royal Navy feature (another remake), *Up to His Neck*. This was a rather grander affair, made at Pinewood for Rank, produced by Hugh Stewart and once again starring Ronald Shiner. Newley rejoiced in his return to Iver Heath and spent as much time as he could either on the lot or in the impressive surrounds of the restaurant. There Robert Newton, in the process of making what would be his last film, could be seen, sitting in splendid isolation, stone-cold sober and miserable.

Newley's behaviour on set was changeable: 'He was subject to violent mood changes within himself,' recalled fellow 'seaman' Bryan Forbes. Forbes was also aware of Tony's frustration in always being 'condemned to lower-deck parts'. But many of his fellow actors were in the same situation and there were few opportunities to break out of that mould. His attitude towards his next contract, *The Blue Peter*, seemed to leave a lot to be desired. Herbert Mason, the film's producer, wrote to Newley in June of 1954:

I am being continually informed that you are very difficult to get on the set, and my own experience shows me that your interest in this picture is so slight that you never know what you ought to wear – or when you ought to wear it. I have a great respect for you as an artiste, but you must show some responsibility – otherwise we shall not have the pleasure of working together again.

Newley also took little responsibility in other parts of his life. Shortly after he and Ann had moved to a bigger flat in Edith Grove, Chelsea, she became pregnant. The possibility of keeping the baby was never discussed; neither of them was ready to settle down and the arrival of a child would certainly hinder both their careers, especially Ann's. Tony persuaded her to have an abortion in a back street clinic and although the decision had been mutual, it was left to Ann to organise the appointment: 'He wasn't very supportive, he just wanted to get rid of it and forget about it.' And forget about it they did. Nevertheless, their relationship changed. Tony began to wonder if this was, after all, the relationship he wanted and he began to look elsewhere, discreetly but frequently. Ann was still very much in love with Tony and although she was his greatest supporter, she was also very possessive. Discreet as he was, she was perfectly aware that there were other girls: 'Happy times and happy days would be broken into by him suddenly drooling over some beautiful thing that had just gone by and I was so aware of it.' Still, she was the one who was living with him. She was number one. Perhaps his wandering gaze could be tolerated? 'It became such a strain on our relationship. Goodness knows how I hung on, but I wanted to.' There were good times too: hanging out with friends; playing Monopoly and endless rounds of cards; and there was never any doubt about Tony's interest in Ann in the bedroom. For all the held-back tears, there was a lot of laughter.

1955 began with another lower-deck role (this one was actually submerged) in London Independent Producers' production of *Above Us the Waves* for Rank, a somewhat leaden feature relating an incident in 1943 when a fleet of three midget submarines sneaked into Norwegian water to sink the German battleship Tirpitz. John Mills, Donald Sinden and John Gregson starred, at a time, according to Newley's fellow 'submariner' William Franklyn, when those whose names appeared above the title rarely talked to those whose names appeared beneath. The part was hardly taxing for Newley. Playing the engineer in Gregson's sub, he was mainly restricted to repeating orders, pulling levers and looking worried. Franklyn and he shared digs while on location during filming, and the two became good friends, the older actor teaching Newley to drive.

In late spring Newley was finally given a more substantial role: that of Clarke in Jose Ferrer's much vaunted *Cockleshell Heroes*. Ferrer both directed and played a main character in this, the fifth feature to come from Irving

Allen and Cubby Broccoli's three-year-old production company, Warwick Films. Newley co-starred with the likes of Victor Maddern and David Lodge while Trevor Howard took the lead. This was a significant break at last and Newley knew it: he may have been bored with constantly being seen as a Cockney cheeky chap, but he recognised that it got him work.

Under the strict supervision of Colonel H G 'Blondie' Hasler, a survivor from the wartime mission, and ten Royal Marines, the actors were put through a rigorous course of training until the Service personnel agreed that no one would be able to determine the difference between an actor and a real Royal Marine. Even the haircuts were regulation. If only National Service had been so much fun and so well paid! The movie was filmed in Portugal where even the heat of the day and the raging River Tagus failed to subdue the English spirit. On one occasion the members of the second film unit were perched on a sand bank in the middle of the river, when they saw a small rowing boat heading in their direction. In the bows sat a Portuguese boy clasping a teapot and a tray of ham and cheese rolls while balancing a basket of cups upon his crossed legs. To the accompaniment of cheers from the film crew, the boy delivered the mid-morning tea-break, on time and without spilling a drop.

On another evening, Newley and David Lodge found themselves mistaken for two merchant seamen out on a binge. Jose Ferrer and Trevor Howard had invited the two actors to join them for supper but had failed to show up. Newley and Lodge had already consumed a couple of beers and had ordered two more by the time they realised that the other two weren't coming and decided to ask for the bill. Lodge was incensed on seeing the vast amount he was to be charged and refused to pay, saying he was damned if he was 'going to be done by a Lisbon barman'. Newley nervously suggested that they should pay and leave. Lodge stood his ground and demanded that they call the police, trusting that the law would take his side. Within moments of the officer's arrival, they were marched at gunpoint to the Police Station followed by an irate waiter, clutching the tray of unpaid drinks as evidence against them. Seated outside the Inspector's office, the two watched and waited as prostitute after prostitute was brought in and charged. At midnight a little girl was dragged in and seated beside them, having been arrested for begging with her mother. At 1 am, four hours after their arrest, they were taken before the Inspector. Lodge and the barman each explained their side of the story but when asked if the Englishmen were going to pay for the drinks, Newley jumped up, notes in hand and said 'Yes!' As the two made their way out of the station, Newley stopped in front of the little girl and smiled. Then digging deep into his pockets, he gathered up all his small change and thrust the coins into the girl's hands.

The film's subsequent success – though not before it had undergone several days of re-shoots – was integral to establishing Warwick Films internationally. At the Royal Premiere in November, Broccoli and Allen were taken aside during the reception by the Duke of Edinburgh, who supposed that they were aware they had missed out the real point of the raid on Bordeaux. Taken aback by this statement, the producers were then provided with the authentic version of events as relayed to the Duke by his uncle, Earl Mountbatten, who was also present. Broccoli and Allen, seeing a publicity coup, agreed to take the film back to the studios before its general release. The reviews were excellent and although Newley only received one mention, it could have been written by his mother: 'Tony Newley is outstanding among the other ranks.' Broccoli and Allen noticed that too.

October 1955 saw a sea change in Newley's professional life. Following a short tour to Germany to entertain the troops, he was cast as one of four performers, along with Marcia Ashton, Gordon Heath and Gilbert Vernon, in a tryout of a new revue called *Cranks*. Devised and directed by the prodigiously talented young South African choreographer John Cranko,* with music by John Addison, the revue was radically different from the sketch-and-song formula that was repeated around the West End, in that there was no dialogue and no plot. One scene dissolved into another, often without rhyme or reason. There was a distinct whiff of the surreal to the lyrics, the direction and use of props set against the gaudy, abstract design by John Piper. Despite the fact that only one of the performers, Gilbert Vernon, was a professional dancer, Cranko made them all appear to be classically trained. The revue opened on 19 December at the New Watergate Theatre Club and was an immediate triumph, attracting especially a large and fascinated following within the business. By the following January, a transfer to St Martin's Theatre at Cambridge Circus was already being planned. For Newley, Cranko was a master and was perhaps the biggest influence on all of his later work:

Cranko's thing never left me. Clear the stage. Let's get back to the beginning. The only time there was any scenery, we brought it on. I can't think of actors in any other way but that they are scrubbed basics,

* At twenty-eight, John Cranko had already been resident choreographer for Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet's 1950–1 season, and had created dances for both the New York City Ballet and Covent Garden Opera's *The Fairy Queen*. His *Pineapple Poll*, set to extracts from Gilbert and Sullivan operettas (jointly conceived with the conductor Charles Mackerras) was produced around the world and remained popular for many years, bringing a wider audience to ballet. Cranko was appointed Director of the Stuttgart Ballet in 1960. His interest in ballet-revue continued with *New Cranks*, a sequel to *Cranks* some years later. Cranko's death at the age of forty-five (as the result of a rare side-effect of a sleeping pill), robbed the ballet world of a formidable and virtuosic talent.

right down to the beginning. He indelibly left that on me and I worshipped him. He was brilliant, crazy, waspish but adorable. He brought out a whole side to me I didn't know I had.

That 'side' was multifaceted. Suddenly Newley was singing with a sweetness and charm that surprised many, but more curiously perhaps, he displayed an innate musicality that allowed songs to breathe, lyrics to blossom and stories to unfold with consummate ease. He produced, from somewhere, a Coward-like verbal dexterity that effortlessly dealt with the challenges of a list song like 'Arthur, Son of Martha'. And the voice was good. He was also exquisitely at one with his body; in 'I'm the Boy You Should Say "Yes" To', Newley eloquently tripped through a pastiche love song (reminiscent of so many contemporary revues) while simultaneously and hilariously wrestling with his would-be lover, oblivious to the abuse being inflicted. There was a gentle quality to his movement that Cranko nurtured, without allowing any appearance of effeminacy. Always one to fiddle and fidget with his hands, now they were part of the Newley performance, his crooked fingers at times rolling the words around like marbles in his palm, at times exploding into flowers that illuminated the lyrics and complemented the moods of the songs. In one musical interlude it was Newley's digital dexterity alone that entranced, as a pair of mischievous white gloves that came alive much to the eventual chagrin of their owner.

The revue closed at the Watergate but the company went immediately into rehearsal for the West End transfer. Cranko replaced Gordon Heath with an unknown New Yorker, Hugh Bryant, and Marcia Ashton with the jazz singer, Annie Ross.* Cranko had met Ross socially and felt an instant rapport with her. He declared during that first meeting that he wanted her to be in his show. The cast rehearsed at the Royal (formerly Sadler's Wells) Ballet School where in the corridors they brushed shoulders with Fonteyn, Nadia Nerina and Antoinette Sibley: 'heady stuff,' thought Ross and, from time to time, Cranko organised team outings to the ballet. On one trip the cast stood in the wings to watch Beryl Grey. 'As she left the stage, Newley, with a look of utter adoration, handed her a single rose,' Ross recalled. 'He had been totally transported by this creature coming off. He was very romantic.' It was yet another world for Newley to discover and absorb. One of the show's most ardent fans was Princess Margaret who even attended rehearsals and gave Cranko her comments. When told that Ross's tutu was to be made by Margot Fonteyn's seamstress she simply raised her eyebrows and answered, 'Ooh Laa!'

* Ross was one third of the acclaimed and unique jazz vocal group, Lambert, Hendriks and Ross.

Cranks opened at St Martin's Theatre on 1 March 1956. It received universal acclaim from the critics and won that year's *Evening Standard* award for best musical entertainment. It transferred in May to the Duchess and once again to the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith where it finally closed in the autumn of that year, Newley having left the show in the August. The audiences continued to include a great many artistes, one of whom was the twenty-five-year-old Leslie Bricusse who had just received an Ivor Novello Award for Best Song, for a number in his movie *Charley Moon*. The new company were inseparable; they played, they partied and Newley loved the attention from the actors and friends who visited.

One actress who was rarely seen in or around the theatre was Ann Lynn: 'We saw very little of Annie, she was a little aloof,' recalled Annie Ross. 'She didn't hang out with the group.' Things back at Edith Grove had worsened. Annie (or Face, as Tony called her) was in and out of the flat and, to avoid the inevitable rows, Newley spent more and more time at the theatre or out with his friends. He had become friendly with a young designer called Gina who was Annie Ross's dresser at St Martin's. She was married to jazz guitarist David Goldberg, whose heroin addiction was destroying him as slowly and surely as it was their marriage. She and Tony began an affair. It seemed to Gina that Ann Lynn was disappearing out of Tony's life and he gave every impression of wanting that relationship to end: 'Ann Lynn wasn't always there,' Gina remembered, 'and we lived together on and off at Edith Grove. He appeared to be quite annoyed when she would turn up, or so it seemed.'

Newley, unable to end his relationship with Ann, continued to see both girls, at times travelling between the two. He was dependent once more on public transport and taxis, having been banned for six months for driving without insurance. His newly acquired licence was still sitting, creaseless, in its envelope. It was with little more than increased irritation that Newley discovered Ann to be pregnant again. A row ensued, during which he made it clear that he was adamant about not wanting a baby. Fearing for their relationship, Ann tried to abort the child, this time without 'professional' help. She failed. The next day she told Tony that she was going to have the child to which Tony responded by telling her that he had fallen in love with somebody else. The arguments started afresh and soon escalated to shouting matches, terminating with Tony's demand that Ann leave. Three months pregnant and unable to return to her family home, she was forced to bed down on the floors of a number of their friends.

While *Cranks* played in the evenings, Newley continued to make movies during the day. He was cast in four films during the revue's run, the first being *Port Afrique* for Coronado Productions, directed by Rudolph Mate. While filming in Spanish Morocco during a period of severe civil unrest

(religious murders were a daily occurrence), Newley's roommate, Christopher Lee, played on his companion's fear of the locals. On returning to their hotel room and finding Newley in the shower, Lee began to have a whispered conversation with himself in fake Arabic. There were two characters, one voiced high and the other low and the distinct impression was of two vagabonds, assassins even, about to fall upon their victim. As he approached the bathroom, whispering all the while, an increasingly panicked, 'Who's there?' could be heard from the cubicle. At the last moment, Lee tore back the curtain to the accompaniment of frenzied screams from the now cowering and terrified Newley.

Tony returned to England to appear in a Hammer horror, *X the Unknown*, playing the doomed Pte Spider Webb who is consumed by a mass of radioactive plasma. After that came Powell and Pressburger's classic war epic, *The Battle of the River Plate*, in which he had finally been cast as a CO. His fee however did not rise accordingly. The movie starred Peter Finch, Anthony Quayle and John Gregson and had a tremendous supporting cast including Christopher Lee, John Le Mesurier and Bernard Lee. A supporting role followed in Terence Fisher's feature, *The Last Man to Hang*. This film, a courtroom thriller starring Tom Conway and based on the British Parliament's efforts to end capital punishment, was produced for Columbia by ACT Films. One day on returning late from the shoot, Tony decided to risk taking the car to the theatre. It was only a matter of weeks before he would have his licence returned and what were the chances of being caught now? As he approached Constitution Hill, however, alongside Buckingham Palace, he was pulled over by the police. Whether they recognised him immediately is uncertain but once they had asked Newley for his driving documents it was clear that he was in serious trouble. The officers warned him that he would face a court summons and would no doubt be fined and have his ban extended. Ann Lynn was living across the road from Newley at a mutual friend's house when she heard about his arrest. She went to see him at their flat and suggested that she might be able to help him a little at the magistrate's hearing by giving him a credible excuse for having taken the car in the first place. They agreed on a story that they had rowed and Ann had become hysterical and refused to drive him to the theatre. Pressed for time, Newley had simply had to use the car.

During this conversation, Ann implored Tony to take her back: 'I was very young, and pregnant. It stirred up a lot of need. After a few months I went back to him and said, "Look! I have nowhere to live, I'm sleeping on people's floors, you have to help."' She had carried on working for a time but now with the bump so evident it was impossible for her to find any employment. But it was the sight of Ann's bump that seemed to have a profound effect upon Tony. 'When he saw me growing larger, he suddenly became

quite paternal and said "Okay, you can come back until the baby is born." With Ann set to be re-established at Edith Grove, Gina decided to end the affair quietly. It hurt to say goodbye, though no more so than she had expected it to: she was deeply in love with Tony and had been from the moment they had met.

One morning in early August, Ann announced that she was going to visit her mother. To her surprise and concern, Tony said that he wanted to go too. Knowing how hostile her mother would be towards Newley, Ann tried to dissuade him from joining her but to no avail. On the way there, they stopped off at Harrods where Newley bought an enormous teddy bear for Ann's brother, a doll for her sister and the compulsory flowers and chocolates for her mother. If he thought the gifts might afford him some kindness he was mistaken: 'My mother went very tight-lipped when she saw Tony and after she had made coffee, she asked me to go into the garden with my brother and sister.' Immediately the door was closed, the matriarch turned on him: 'Now look here, Tony, you may *be* a bastard but there's no need to act like one. What are you going to do about Ann?'

A few minutes later, Tony appeared in the garden: 'Look, Face, we'll go away and then we'll come back and get married.'

Without a moment's pause Ann turned to him and said, 'Fine.'

The couple spent a week in Antibes and Newley seemed a changed man and genuinely happy. He was kind and caring and when they came back he invited all their friends around to the flat to show them the film he had made of their holiday. He was also full of excitement about the impending birth of their child. As the pregnancy progressed, Tony seemed to become more paternal. He adored Ann's new and mysterious shape and would spend hours with palms strategically placed, waiting for the baby's kick. He wanted this child.

Gracie's presence around the flat was even more noticeable. She had never liked Ann and did not approve of their planned wedding. It was not going to be easy to let go of her only son, grandchild or no. The wedding took place at Chelsea Register Office on 30 August. That morning Newley had received a letter, the content of which would change his life. Cubby Broccoli and Irving Allen had been impressed by Newley on the set of *Cockleshell Heroes* and had decided to offer him a five-year contract with Warwick Films worth £30,000. It almost seemed like a gift from heaven for doing the honourable thing. The wedding was a simple affair with only a handful of guests. As Tony and Ann left the Register Office they were immediately surrounded by the press who had been tipped the wink by Warwick. As the flash bulbs began to explode, representatives of Warwick threw a great wreath of flowers over Ann to hide the evidence of her pregnancy. That was publicity they didn't

want. The party continued back at Edith Grove with the Franklyns, Jennifer Jones, Clive and Mara Exton, Gracie and a late night, fleeting visit from Sean Connery. Much to Ann's annoyance, Gracie stayed until three in the morning, clutching her son's hand. Newley felt as though things were finally beginning to happen. *Cranks* had been a fantastic success and with the Warwick contract on offer, what could stop him now?

On 4 October, Anthony Newley attended the hearing at Bow Street Magistrates Court where he pleaded guilty to the charge of driving while disqualified and was sentenced to twenty-eight days imprisonment in Brixton Prison, fined £15 and banned from driving for a further three years. He had expected to walk away with a heavy fine so he was in no way prepared for a custodial sentence. The case put forward by his barrister, Mr Fearnley-Whittingstall had failed to impress the Magistrate. He was in no doubt that Newley thought himself above and beyond the law, and decided to teach this young man a lesson. A devastated Newley was led away to begin his sentence. The feeling of utter loss washed over him just as it had done on his arrival at Aldershot, but there was no way he could 'fiddle' this. His initial terror was compounded by the fear of losing the Warwick contract that lay unsigned on his agent's desk. He needn't have worried. A letter, blue-pencilled, arrived a week later from Broccoli: 'I must say this is one hell of a way to start our association together, but I hope that when we do start, you will be happy working with us.'

Newley quickly adapted to prison life. He joined the pottery class for which he asked Ann to send him ten shillings so that he could keep his figurines. He wrote continually, including warm and loving letters to Ann, filled with thoughts about their baby. He ended one:

If love and sympathy
Were a soft pillow and
A woman's voice
I should sleep like a lord.

The Ballad of Brixton Jail

His love of reading was nurtured further during his sentence: 'I've read like a hungry man seeking culture all the time I've been in Brixton. It's helped my writing no end.' He also worked on a script that Warwick had given him and started to write a screenplay of his own based on prison life. While inside, he received the news that John Cranko had secured another transfer for the show; this time to Broadway. Cranko had always promised to bring Newley back into the revue should it ever go further than the West End but now that seemed impossible. Tony's criminal record would undoubtedly preclude him from joining the cast and so he was to be replaced by Kenneth

STOP THE WORLD

Haigh who had just had a personal success in John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* at The Royal Court. Newley's disappointment was palliated by the possibilities that awaited him at Warwick. And then there was the baby. He had to admit that there was a lot to look forward to.

He wrote to Annie to remind her not to forget the camera and light meter so that the release of No 5989 Newley A from Her Majesty's Pleasure could be recorded for posterity.

CHAPTER FOUR

I WANNA BE RICH

ON THE MORNING OF 3 NOVEMBER, a pale and quiet Newley stepped out of jail, clutching a few possessions including the clay models and a wad of drawings. He was relieved to get back to Edith Grove and seemed happy just to be there. He and Ann began to discuss the forthcoming birth and the need to move to a larger flat. They called on their neighbour, William Franklyn, to help them look for one. Tony began to relax and see his friends again; he also began to dine out on the stories of his time in 'Brixton Boys' School'. In a display of bravado, he had his prison number embroidered on his dressing gown, and around town wore a jacket with 'Brixton '56' emblazoned on the back.

His one-time comedy duo partner, Dick Vosburgh, managed to get him a little work. Vosburgh was working on a television programme called *Alfred Marks Time* and he urged Alfred and his wife to book Tony. 'He only had two days of rehearsal and he was fantastic,' Vosburgh remembered, 'playing the William Holden part in a sketch sending up the movie *Sunset Boulevard*.' Newley also continued to be heard on Elsie and Doris Waters' radio show, *The Floggetts*, as well as *Askey Galore*, and it was only a matter of time before work would start with Warwick Films.

Soon after he was released, Tony paid a visit to his mother up at Highbury. The flat was much the same as before and Gracie was still charring. With utter pride he announced that from that moment on she could stop cleaning and taking in laundry. He had always promised her that one day she could put down her iron for good and now that day had come. He told her to look for a house to buy and he would pay.

He was awaiting his first project from Warwick when Terry Cooke called to advise him that all was not well with *Cranks* in New York. Kenneth Haigh was proving to be an uncomfortable replacement for Newley. His considerable talent as an actor was not matched by his confidence as a singer, which he had made apparent by banning anybody from sitting in on his rehearsals back in London, and now in New York, he had serious professional differences with one of the producers, John Krinsky. He had also failed to bond with the other three in the cast. As Annie Ross recalled, 'Kenneth was very strange then. He had just done *Look Back in Anger* but he was very insecure. He wasn't

a regular fellow as you would say.' In the days leading up to the opening it became clear that the new member of the team was simply not going to fit in: Krimsky and his partner, Richard Charlton, paid Haigh off and Newley was asked to join them in New York.

A Broadway debut was seen both by Tony and Ann as an opportunity not to be missed and they agreed that he should accept, knowing that he would thereby miss the birth of their child. Once Newley had secured a visa to travel, Haigh was released from the show. Newley was rather subdued when he arrived at the Edison Hotel and still had the pasty look and shorn hair of a recent inmate but he was received by the cast as their saviour. The opening night was delayed until Newley had recovered from the journey and had been rehearsed back into show.

As the first night approached, the cast were toasted around town and invited to speak at lunches, and they appeared on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. Curiously, only Ross, Newley and Gilbert Vernon went on the show to perform three of the numbers. Hugh Bryant, the only black member of the team, was notable by his absence and was not even named by Sullivan but referred to only as 'another performer'. On 26 November *Cranks* opened at the Bijou Theatre to an enthusiastic audience and it seemed to the producers that they might very well have a hit. The euphoric company returned to the producers' apartment where they were met by a delighted and welcoming crowd. After a while Charlton and Krimsky, all smiles and laughter, left to get the papers for the first notices. They returned, considerably more restrained. As the pair crossed the room it was suggested that the cast should retire to the den to read the reviews. The quartet did as they were told. 'British Revue Is Too Much, Too Arduous,' ran the *Daily Mirror* and continued, '*Cranks* just not what doctor ordered.' Five out of the seven notices were distinctly cool towards the show, describing it as 'intermittently satisfying', 'window dressing', 'too much of a muchness' and 'so downright cute and coy, as to approach the Bromo Seltzer border line'. The seven critics, however, were unanimous in celebrating the talents on the Bijou's stage and were especially complimentary about Newley, praising his admirable pantomimic gifts and macabre intensity. *The New York Times* spied a trace of dissent in his performance:

But this column finds itself drawn closest to Mr Newley. For Mr Newley, with a shaggy haircut and disinterested expression, looks as if he did not altogether trust the material. His smile is halfway between a sneer and a smile. As a satiric dancer, he is as expert as the others. If the director compels him to stand on a chair on top of a table or wave a brace of fans at the end of a song he will do it as well as the next man. But something about him suggests that he knows better.

Perhaps the boy, fresh out of Brixton Prison, no longer believed in all of Mr Cranko's magic.

A stunned silence fell over the foursome for just a moment before they looked at each other and with one voice said, 'Let's go get drunk!' They flung open the connecting door to dive back into the warmth and comfort of American smiles only to find the room empty apart from the agent, who quickly explained that as the notices weren't good, she had suggested the guests should probably leave. The party was definitely over. The next day notes of apology began to arrive at their hotel, informing them of the lunches that for a variety of reasons had had to be cancelled. It was clear to the visitors that it was *they* who had been cancelled. The producers decided to stick with the show to see if they could pick up some Christmas trade while the cast, in no doubt of the show's imminent closure, just 'played it out'.

Newley played more than the others. He had started to see Beverly Bentley, the 'weather girl' who later married Norman Mailer. She and Newley were rarely apart and Ross remembered him being far from discreet about his affair. At the same time he met and befriended the actor Michael Lipton who had seen *Cranks* and was himself appearing in *Separate Tables* across the way.

Back in London, Ann was desperate to have the baby. It was already two weeks overdue and she was more than ready to put behind her the pregnancy (which had been fairly hellish) and the misery of the preceding months. She and Tony both wanted the child and at last she could look forward to the future with the man she loved so dearly. She caught the bus up to Queen Charlotte's Hospital to be induced and there, a few hours later and alone, she gave birth to her son. Her mother came to see her and immediately called New York. On 21 December 1956, Newley received the news that Ann had given birth to a baby boy whom she had called Simon. Had Ann's mother waited a little longer with her daughter, she might not have been so precipitate in telling Tony the news. Simon had been born with spina bifida; a gaping wound in his back. He also had extensive brain damage and was suffering from encephalitis. Images of her attempt to abort the baby all those months ago flooded Ann's mind. Had she done this to their son? Simon was put into intensive care and the doctor advised Ann that her baby was highly unlikely to survive.

On the other side of the Atlantic in the Plaza Hotel, Tony sat with Michael Lipton watching *Son of Four Below* and gazing admiringly at the blonde beauty with bangs on stage. Newley suddenly pulled out the telegram that had brought the news and muttered, 'I would have offered you all cigars but there's nothing to celebrate.' Lipton hadn't even known that his friend was married.

Ann and Tony spoke on the phone and between them they decided that he should come home after the show closed on 29 December, arriving back in

England the following day, which coincided exactly with Ann's release day from hospital. On the night before they returned, Beverly Bentley threw a farewell party at Gene Shepherd's apartment for Tony and the cast. As Michael Lipton left in the early hours, Tony went over to say goodbye. Just as they were parting Lipton suddenly welled up. Tony looked surprised and quietly said, 'That's the first time that anyone has shed tears for me when I've said goodbye.'

Newley touched down at London Airport and took a taxi directly to the hospital. He met Ann and she took him through to their baby. He gazed at the forlorn child and wondered how this could have happened, how fickle could the fates be? What was the point of all the pain, the arguments, the reconciliations and the new-born hope if this was the outcome? Without thinking he said, 'God, isn't it ugly.' The hospital offered to arrange a christening which both Tony and Ann, having no interest in Christianity, declined. They returned home and then Tony did a peculiar thing. He invited friends over for supper and, once they had arrived, proceeded to show them pictures of Beverley Bentley. It wasn't long before Ann realised that he had been having another affair. (On another occasion, Beryl Vosburgh was dismayed when Tony said she had to be terribly kind to him, because he'd fallen in love with a girl in America. Beryl remembered not feeling terribly kind at all.) Ann continued to visit Simon every few days, but always alone. Back at Edith Grove Tony, perhaps unable to deal with the awfulness of the situation, never mentioned the child and he never saw his son again. It seemed as though, for him, the baby had never existed. Some six weeks later, Simon died. 'I had had a bad night and the telephone rang very early and I remember going to the phone and knowing what it was. A voice at the end of the line said, "Your baby died at..." Tony was there then; he cuddled me and we cried. And then he had to go to work.' Ann needed Tony desperately but they couldn't share their sorrow. He didn't want to talk and before long, against her own instincts, Ann began to act in the same way. Ann went to the hospital to sign the death certificates and was not offered the chance to see her child one last time. She and Tony were invited to the service that would be held in the hospital chapel but both declined. Neither Ann nor Tony ever knew what happened to Simon's body and Ann would never have another child.

By now, Newley's contract with Warwick had kicked in and consequently Ann found herself increasingly alone. She located a larger flat at 185 Chatsworth Court off the Earls Court Road and the couple moved in. Ann filled her time by decorating the apartment. Tony took little interest in 'things domestic' and expected his wife to manage the housekeeping on a meagre amount of money: 'He had no idea of what everything cost and I had no clothes. We would row a lot. I had very strong views and I could give Tony as good as I got.'

They continued as best they could but there were more clouds than sunshine. They would accept invitations to their friends, and spent time with John and Wendy Hannam down in Somerset. There Newley would rise late and enjoy the calm and the quiet. He rarely instigated any games or activities but instead seemed perfectly happy just to be. With the Hannams, Tony could relax and do nothing; a peace of mind he enjoyed with very few people. Their home was somewhere for him to escape to and it remained so for many years to come. Ann went to the movie premieres and, from time to time, would accompany Tony to a shoot but she never joined him on location abroad. She was never asked. Ann knew that she couldn't trust her husband: every job carried with it a bevy of gorgeous and willing girls and it seemed that he could not or would not restrain himself.

Ann began to act again, attending the Actors' Studio, and before long found herself playing opposite Charles Laughton and Albert Finney in *The Party*. Her own career had never benefited from Tony's and now it didn't need to. Slowly over the next two years, almost imperceptibly at first, the couple began to move apart: 'It was downhill all the way for us from then on but uphill all the way for him. During those years we did have a marriage and he would say he loved me. I think he did from time to time.' She further recalled that it was hard to get Tony to reveal his true self: 'I didn't think he was really ruthless but that he just had to do for himself without thinking.'

Warwick Films, named after the hotel in New York, was established in 1952 when Albert R Broccoli (his grandfather developed the vegetable) and Irving Allen put together a three picture deal with Alan Ladd. They had no money and little experience of running a company, although Broccoli had been an agent and Allen had made a handful of films back in Hollywood, including the 1947 short *Climbing the Matterhorn* which had won him an Academy Award. They settled in Britain to create what was, in all respects, a repertory film company. There were few actors actually on contract but many who would appear again and again (and usually as the same 'character') in the company's films. The partners also had an eye for a good deal, hiring American actors whose box office draw was beginning to dwindle in the States but who would be seen as a great coup in England. And it worked. Warwick was rated way above many of England's indigenous film companies and by the time Newley joined its ranks was considered one of the main players in America as well. The company had a reputation for using glamorous locations and the partners were sticklers for realism. There were also many boats (Broccoli's particular passion) and even more horses (Allen's). They used quality writer/directors including John Gilling, Terence Young, Richard Maibaum (who went on to write thirteen of Broccoli's eighteen Bond films) and the young Bryan Forbes. Maibaum had reworked Forbes's original screenplay of *Cockleshell*

Heroes and it was to Forbes's bitter disappointment that the role he had carefully constructed for himself, that of Clarke,* was eventually given to Newley.

The two partners were poles apart in temperament and in the ways they dealt with the inherent problems of running Warwick. Irving Allen was a bear of a man, unpredictable and impetuous. He didn't suffer fools gladly, or anyone else for that matter, and it was he who was seen as the disciplinarian of the two. As one actor noted, 'Allen did the bollocking!' It wasn't always the actors who were subject to Allen's brusque approach. Jose Ferrer walked out of a screening of the rushes of *Cockleshell Heroes* when Allen shouted, 'Jesus Christ! If there are any more of these shots, we'll have to change the title to *Rowing up the River*!' It was Cubby's role to pour oil on troubled waters – or as Newley saw it, to follow Irving around the set, saying, 'I'm sorry. He didn't mean that. I'm sorry.' In any event, it was Broccoli whom the actors would turn to for help and support.

By 1957 Warwick could attract major stars, but Newley, although on contract, was never certain as to the size or quality of the roles he would be asked to play. Thus in his debut outing, *How to Murder a Rich Uncle*, he was cast as a twitchy, bespectacled student of criminal law in this likeable black comedy. Nigel Patrick both directed the film and played Henry, the destitute nobleman who conspires to murder his rich Canadian uncle (played by Charles Coburn) for the inheritance. Coburn, blissfully unaware of the machinations against him, avoids the attempts upon his life, each of which results in the death of another member of the family. Inevitably, Henry is also killed when he walks into one of his own traps – the twist being that it is the uncle who is arrested for the various murders. Newley evidently enjoyed this one, showing an ease of style that marked his better performances. Unfortunately, the film was compared unfavourably with both *Kind Hearts and Coronets* and *The Ladykillers*.†

At the same time, Newley found himself playing a Spanish waiter called Miguel in *Fire Down Below*, alongside Jack Lemmon and Robert Mitchum who were cast as the world-weary owners of a tramp-steamer in the West

* Allen and Broccoli paid Forbes the less than princely sum of \$75 per week for writing the screenplay but had sweetened this paltry offer by asking him to write a starring part for himself. When it came to casting, however, Jose Ferrer had other ideas. Forbes though, had the last word (and laugh?), as Broccoli and Allen commissioned him, without informing Ferrer, to rewrite, expand and supervise the filming of certain passages for Trevor Howard's role of Capt Thompson.

† Katie Johnson, who shot to fame in *The Ladykillers* at the grand old age of seventy-seven, played a similar role in the Warwick movie and then died shortly after filming, aged seventy-eight.

Indies. The love interest was Rita Hayworth, playing what would be her last screen temptress role. The film should have been a bigger success than it was but the final edit removed any of the original subtlety and left a plodding, thoroughly predictable product. Even the inclusion of a highly erotic dance performed by Hayworth failed to arouse the audience's interest. The interiors were filmed at the MGM studios in England, and to create a suitably tropical flavour Warwick had to import a steel band, five limbo dancers and a calypso singer from Trinidad. Newley's fast-talking single scene, though short, was thoroughly convincing. There was even a hint of humour that the producers had not expected and he certainly squared up to the performances of Lemmon and Mitchum.

Co-starring were Herbert Lom and Newley's old 'father', Bernard Lee, as a less than sober doctor. Lee narrowly escaped death twice while on location in Trinidad. He fell from his moped and smashed his knee which then became septic. However, it was this injury that saved him from another incident. While journeying to the set with the production nurse in a taxi, the knee suddenly began to cause him a great deal of pain. The driver pulled over to allow both Lee and the nurse to step out of the taxi to inspect the inflamed joint. A moment after they were clear of the car, a lorry crashed in to it, propelling it several yards along the road and entirely crushing the rear of the taxi.

It was with *High Flight* that Newley really began to stamp his own image upon the screen. He felt that the part of Roger Endicott (once again the comic interest), in this rites of passage feature based on the travails of a Royal Air Force cadet squadron, marked a comeback. Billed beneath the bewigged and 'one-legged' Ray Milland, Newley, complete with handle-bar moustache, co-starred alongside Kenneth Fortescue and Warwick contractee Kenneth Haigh with a host of names in smaller roles, including Grace Arnold, John Le Mesurier, Kynaston Reeves and the now recovered Bernard Lee. Newley was also credited as one of the composers. 'The Open Boat Song', the little ballad from *Our Man Townsend*, turned up, transformed into a round-the-piano drinking song blasted out by the cadets while Newley mimed away at the keyboard. This brief musical offering afforded Newley a credit alongside the master of martial music, Eric Coates. The critics were adulatory about Newley, especially the *Daily Mirror*: 'But the two best things in this film are the fast comedy and the brilliant flying. Thank the RAF for that... And also the performance of a fine, hilariously funny actor named Anthony Newley. He will be a star... You'll see.' There could be no doubt in the producers' minds that they had struck lucky (possibly gold) with Newley.

While filming *High Flight* Newley first met Anne Aubrey, with whom he would go on to make a further eight Warwick movies. The statuesque actress

had appeared fleetingly in the film, yet her name found its way into the credits adjacent to featured actors. Anne was credited as one of the co-stars in Newley's next movie, *Tank Force* (aka *No Time To Die*), but this time she didn't appear on the screen at all, a victim of the cutting-room floor. For her moment's exposure on a train in *The Man Inside* she managed to get reviewed. Perhaps that was due to the guiding hand of Irving Allen. The producers were grooming her for greater things and insisted she attend their own version of the Rank charm school. There she learnt poise, 'literally walking around a room with a book on my head. They were quite ruthless about it. You had to do it.'

Tank Force cemented Newley's position as a leading screen actor and it also cemented his image as the cheeky chappie, the comic relief. Playing opposite Victor Mature was one thing but Newley began to hanker after more serious roles. He too could play the romantic lead, couldn't he? For as long as he stayed with Warwick the answer was 'no'. Tony's frustration was compounded at the beginning of 1958, when he was cast as Ernesto, a Spanish taxi-driver, in the European diamond heist thriller *The Man Inside*, starring Jack Palance, Anita Ekberg and Nigel Patrick. The screenplay by Richard Maibaum, David Shaw and John Gilling (who also directed) strongly foreshadowed the Bond films that were only a few years away. Palance caused a stir amongst the English actors who were unfamiliar with the method actor's pre-scene warm up. Tony and Anne could hardly contain their laughter when they saw Jack 'wrestling with himself in a kind of epileptic fit' before acting. Meeting Aubrey one morning on the set Palance asked her if she 'wanted to have lunch'. Anne, a little confused at such an early invitation to eat, politely declined, explaining that she had already organised to meet Tony in the pub later on. At lunch, Tony explained to her that Palance wasn't interested in food: he was asking her to have sex with him before his next shot.

Newley's irritation at having yet another comic role foisted upon him vanished when the film was released and the reviewers once again fell at his feet: the film, according to the *Daily Mirror*, was distinguished mainly 'by an astoundingly amusing performance from Anthony Newley'. The *Daily Herald* concurred – 'splendid as a lecherous Spanish taxi-driver' – as did the *Daily Mail*: 'the theft of the diamond was less absorbing than the theft of the picture by Anthony Newley'.

After a review like that, it was no wonder that Anna Neagle and Herbert Wilcox wanted Newley in *The Lady is a Square*. This was a limp pot-boiler riding on the pop chart fame of the film's leading man, Frankie Vaughan. They invited Newley to be the guest star, secured his temporary release from Warwick and gave him the part of Freddy, Vaughan's Jewish agent. Not surprisingly, Newley had a ball. Vaughan's talents were strictly limited to his singing and even then his flailing limbs and gangly physique were not admired

by all; when it came to acting, he seemed to leave a void on the screen where a character should have been. Meanwhile, Tony romped around him, over him and through him like an ebullient but rude Labrador puppy and the press loved it: 'Anthony Newley walks away with the picture,' declared the *Telegraph*, which Newley knew was no great feat.

Neagle and Wilcox had perhaps been astute in distracting the audience's attention from their star's limitations by employing such an individual comedian like Newley. Almost immediately they booked him again for Vaughan's next feature, the terminally dull *The Heart of a Man*, in which Newley repeated his performance as the singer's agent, only this time he was Johnny with greying hair, a lousy memory and a penchant for large-breasted blondes. This was easy money with great reviews to boot. Newley's success as a comic actor in his own right reaffirmed Broccoli and Allen's determination to continue casting him – except that now they would make him the star, once they could find him a suitable vehicle. Intriguingly, Tony and Frankie remained friends throughout their lives and Tony would describe him as 'the sweetest man to have ever drawn breath'.

In the spring of 1958 Tony recorded for BBC Television a forty-minute monologue by Ken Hughes who also directed. *Sammy* told the story of a two-bit gambler who is suddenly compelled to find the £300 he owes to avoid meeting his creditors' heavies. The play takes place in a squalid bedsit and consists of Sammy's increasingly fraught telephone calls as the deadline approaches. Tony wrote notes to himself on the side of the script, 'Learn words perfectly first. Then forget and create other people.' The play won Hughes the Guild of TV Producers' Award and second place in the Critics' Poll. He also had the distinction of being the first British writer to win an Emmy for Best Play. For Newley, *Sammy* was a serious role at last, hardly a gag to be found and he was good too. Perhaps this would make Warwick think again.

By early summer, the tension between Tony and Ann Lynn had become unbearable. The unspoken sadness of what they had shared lay festering in every recess of their relationship. Behind the simplest of activities lurked the knowledge of what had happened to them. They still made love, passionately and furiously, but whatever companionship had previously existed between them now seemed entirely eroded. Ann recalled, 'He wasn't a friend, he wasn't there enough to be a friend. I started to look elsewhere because I finally realised that this was not what I wanted.' Ann eventually found another suitor and though he 'wasn't that interesting', she decided to test Tony. She had over the years threatened to walk out on several occasions, after discovering Tony's various dalliances with other girls, but he had always stopped her leaving. Wanting to get a reaction, she told him that she had fallen in love with

another man. She then asked Tony whether he wanted her to leave. Tony, unmoved, replied, 'We'll try it.' Ann moved out but returned ten days later asking to be taken back. Newley refused. Ann confessed to having no pride where Tony was concerned and was desperate. It was clear however that he was not willing to try again. Yet when they met, they would invariably end up in bed together and Tony would assure Ann that he was confident that they would get back together, one day. 'I think he stayed with me because he was pretty wretched. He was too young and he couldn't cope. He just blanked it out. We were two young idiots. Irresponsible idiots. Very strange. Shocking.'

With Ann out of the flat, Newley found he needed someone to help him keep track of all his correspondence and to organise the ever-increasing pile of articles and reviews on the dining table. The man who seemed to his friends so nonchalant about his career was an avid collector of all things that mentioned him or his work. Robert Selby, an old friend from Conti's, came to Newley's aid but was surprised by quite how exacting Newley was about keeping absolutely everything, even if the same review had appeared in more than one paper: 'He wanted to keep them *all*. He wanted to know that his fame was spreading around the country. I think he wanted to create the image and was creating history for himself.' The two became close friends, Selby becoming Newley's secretary, and it was Selby who gave Tony the sobriquet 'The Young Master'. Newley liked that. When Robert eventually had to leave, Newley was genuinely upset and gave him a photograph inscribed 'Love Tone', which Selby's friends thought an expression of considerable affection. All the more surprising, therefore, that when Selby went to see Newley in performance some ten years later and left a message at the stage door saying he would pop round after the show, he was met with an impersonal note from Tony's dresser informing him that Mr Newley was too busy to meet anybody that evening. Selby was taken aback and not a little disappointed.

Almost two years to the day since Newley signed up with Warwick, he was given his first starring role. As one of the three leads in *The Bandit of Zhobe*, he was billed above the title in between Victor Mature and Anne Aubrey. The film was directly linked to a Richard Maibaum movie Warwick had made two years previously called *Zarak*, starring Mature and Anita Ekberg and directed by Terence Young. Young had managed to film half a feature's worth of footage beyond what was needed or indeed used. Seeing a chance, Broccoli and Allen decided to make use of some of the footage in the guise of another movie. John Gilling was contracted as screenwriter and director and Mature was hired again. Aubrey was chosen in a final casting session by the *Daily Mirror's* film critic, Donald Zec, and Newley was brought in to offer some comic relief in the role of Stokes. The result was a colourful if uneven

yarn set in Empire India with Mature's bandit, Kasim Khan, terrorising the British in the mistaken belief that it was Her Majesty's troops who massacred his family. Along the way he finds time to woo and kidnap Aubrey's Zenda, much to the distress of her minder, Stokes. The mood of the film is on the whole dark and violent but Newley's comic performance was shoehorned into the proceedings, at times so uncomfortably that he might as well have been appearing in a different movie altogether. (A character very similar to Stokes was found to be alive and well in *Carry On up the Khyber* some ten years later.)

The combination of the two movies was for the most part successful, although for the more astute observer, there was some fun to be had. At the beginning of one scene, *Zarak's* Michael Wilding rides in from afar on a white stallion, but the same horse is seen to leave the village with a similarly clad Norman Wooland astride. Aubrey's costumes were those of Anita Ekberg: they did not need altering, which brought about the friendly jibe from the other actors that Anne had got the part due to the fact that she was the only girl in England who had the same vital statistics as Ekberg.

Newley's behaviour was beginning to be seen as mildly eccentric by his friends and colleagues. He had specific dietary requirements in an attempt to ease his stomach. He still had his ulcer and was used to the poached eggs and warm milk that his mother prepared for him, and Ann Lynn too had always taken a great deal of care in cooking for him. Although Newley was much loved on the set he would keep himself very much to himself when not on call, rarely joining his fellow actors on sightseeing trips. When he did, he was always without money, remarking that 'Royalty don't carry cash'. It was common knowledge that he had a fixation about sleep and he never left home without his earplugs and eye mask. He was a terrible traveller too. These traits, or 'curses' as Newley referred to them, would become considerably more pronounced over the subsequent thirty years.

With *The Bandit of Zhobe*, Newley had left behind the realm of supporting roles. He was now indisputably an established British film star. He liked to describe himself as a 'serious comedian' who was not a gag artist or comic performer but instead projected humour 'from human fundamentals within a character'. He started to feel that he was doing Broccoli and Allen a favour by playing the comedy parts and that without him the films would tumble. So it was only reasonable, should Warwick remain insistent on using him exclusively as their comic actor, that they should try to find him suitable scripts that utilised all his talents.

CHAPTER FIVE

IT ISN'T ENOUGH

THE 'REPERTORY' COMPANY AT WARWICK included amongst others Anne Aubrey, Martin Boddey, Sean Kelly, Bernie Winters, David Lodge, Sid James and Harry Fowler. They had all worked with Newley in various movies but came together for the first time on Broccoli and Allen's next project. The producers had bought the rights to a modest novel by William Camp about Jeep Jackson, a rock and roll star who is called up into the British Army – a sort of 'Elvis in England' theme entitled *Idle On Parade*. Newley would play Jackson. Lionel Jefferies, in his first movie for Warwick, joined the cast as Anne Aubrey's suitor, the febrile adjutant, Bertie. Newley had seen Jefferies appearing with his friend Peter Sellers in Peter Hall's West End production of *Brouhaha* and was sufficiently impressed to suggest to Broccoli that Jefferies would be ideal for the part. Jefferies recalled that he, Broccoli and Allen had already met during the auditions for *Cockleshell Heroes*. When asked whether he could ride a bike, the actor replied, 'Are you interested in whether I can ride a bike or whether I can act? I don't think you need me in this.' Broccoli told Jefferies later that they had rather liked that and had decided to keep an eye on him anyway.

Newley's generosity and keen eye paid dividends for Jefferies, who went on to appear in several of Cubby's features including the enchanting and enduring *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, and he was always openly grateful to Newley for that initial leg-up into movies. The mandatory American in *Idle On Parade* was William Bendix, on board as the 'bark worse than his bite' Sergeant Lush, with an Irish accent that was even worse than his bark. This was Bendix's first British movie, his first location work outside America and marked his first trip to England. John Gilling directed what would be his last film for Warwick.

During early discussions over the script, Newley commented on the lack of any songs and persuaded John Antrobus, the screenwriter, to work some musical moments into the action. Len Praverman, Warwick's regular composer, collaborated with Gerry Laudan to write some 'popular' songs, and Newley also tried his hand at composing a few suitable rock numbers, teaming up with Joe 'Mr Piano' Henderson, who had previously had a hit with his song 'Trudie', written for *The Man Inside*.

There were four songs by the time the film went into production: the title track and 'I've Waited So Long' by Praverman and Laudan, plus two rock-a-boogie numbers, 'Idle Rock-a-Boogie' and 'Sat'day Night Rock-a-Boogie', by Newley and Henderson. Newley went into the Decca Record Company studios to record the four songs which were to be released with the movie, on an extended play (EP) disc. His 'Idle Rock-a-Boogie' contained lyrics that could have been written eight years previously:

They dressed me all in khaki
And gave me a gun.
The colour didn't suit me
So I went on the run.

The 'soldiers' were given drill instruction at the Welsh Guards depot, but by now Newley was at ease with military training. In the period since leaving Aldershot he had played various privates, a submariner, a navy officer, a Victorian corporal, an RAF cadet and a tank engineer. He had blown up German warships, single-handedly calmed the natives in India, survived the Libyan desert, galloped across the plains of Africa and drowned in a Norwegian fjord. A little square-bashing at Shepperton was a breeze.

What Newley did apply himself to, however, was his singing. It was one thing to have suggested that songs were needed for the movie; it was quite another thing to have to get up and sing them. Newley grabbed every possible moment he could to rehearse and could often be found hidden away in some distant part of the lot, singing scales and practising breathing exercises. It seemed slightly curious to Anne Aubrey that the actor who had been so keen to play straight roles was now, suddenly, a singer heading in an entirely different direction. She admired his determination, though.

Determined he was, and before long the work began to pay off. While filming one of the numbers at the Scala Theatre in London, over a hundred teenage extras were shipped in to be Jackson's 'fans'. When given the go-ahead, they screamed enthusiastically as Newley belted out the song. When the cameras finished rolling, one young girl continued to scream and clap her hands. Gilling's assistant tapped her on the shoulder and pointed out that the scene was over and that she could stop acting. The girl turned back to the stage, and catching Newley's eye, said, 'Who's acting?'

This was a happy time for Newley. He had his own film; he was surrounded by friends, and since his parting with Ann, Gina had returned briefly into his life. This second meeting was perhaps a more serious one for Newley. He asked Gina if she would marry him but she knew that she wouldn't be able to tolerate or cope with his womanising, so concluded that this was not the right

time to be getting involved with him and answered, 'Maybe one day.' The relationship continued until Gina realised that Tony was not about to change. The two parted once again and, soon after, Gina met the Italian artist, Renato Fratini, whom she later married: 'I never found that same connection, though, with anyone else.'

On the set there were games and jokes to be played. Harry Fowler and Newley led the pack although Newley was never one of the crowd: instead, in Aubrey's view, he had his cronies, and if they liked you, then you might be accepted into the group. She tended to avoid them when off the set, although the closed door of her dressing room was small protection where pranks were concerned. Pornographic magazines were left open on her table by Newley and Fowler who would kneel outside the door waiting for a reaction. 'I had a sense of humour, so I survived.' On the sound stage, Newley was 'wonderful' as far as Lionel Jefferies was concerned: he was never late, he always knew his lines and he never threw his weight about. Newley was one of those actors who just 'got on and did it. He was very basic and he had this God-given talent and a yearning to amuse. There was a volcano inside of him, bursting to get out, he was this little power-house and he always had to be doing something.'

Idle On Parade, filmed in black and white, was a muddle of half-developed storylines and characters that were even less developed. Gilling's direction was at best pedestrian, but the audiences loved it. The most remarkable thing about the movie was the EP. Within days of its release, Newley had landed in the charts with the two Praverman and Laudan numbers (the songs had been ferociously promoted by the writers' agent Frank Bunn, whereas the Newley/Henderson songs had received very little coverage) and six weeks later, he was at number three with 'I've Waited So Long' and number thirteen with 'Idle On Parade'. Overnight, Anthony Newley the actor and 'serious comedian' was a pop star. He was a sensation.

Warwick, like its competitors, expected all its leading actors to attend various regional cinemas, either to launch or promote their films. For *Idle* (or *Idol On Parade*, as it was becoming known) Jefferies, Aubrey, Lodge and Newley prepared a twenty-minute show of chat, sketches and songs and followed the film around the country. As Newley's records began to creep up the charts, so the attendance of a younger audience began to increase at the theatres. From being a fairly well known film actor, Newley was now recognised by another generation who were a good deal more vocal (and physical) in expressing their admiration. Newley's immediate reaction to this tactile interest from his fans was to turn the other way – literally. When asked by his colleagues why on earth he was sitting in the hotel bar with his face to the wall he answered,

in all honesty, 'It's my public, they'll recognise me.' This new-found reticence was not to Broccoli or Allen's taste, and as Aubrey remembered, 'They didn't let him get away with that for long.'

The other actors had good reason to be wary of these appearances for they would not always go smoothly. On a visit to the 'seediest cinema in West London', as Jefferies recounted, the group were pelted with ice creams, which were still in the tubs. On another outing, much to the amusement of Newley and his friends, the team were up against the theatre manager: 'Ladies and Gennulmen we're going to 'ave a bit of an interval before the film starts but first of all we've got a few o' the stars. You've probably never 'eard of 'im, but 'ere's Anthony Newlyns.' Bernard Bresslaw, who was also appearing, was introduced as Bernard Braden, while David Lodge ended up as Danny Hodges, a name that stuck with him for several years. The audience, however, knew exactly who they were and lifted the roof when the actors, by this time beside themselves with laughter, finally reached the stage.

On another occasion Jefferies and Newley, returning from one engagement by train, came across Paul Robeson sat alone in a compartment. Newley could hardly contain himself and stammered, 'Excuse me Mr Robeson, I think you are one of the great singer-actors of all time.' Robeson beamed and replied, 'You couldn't be more right.' And on one trip by private plane, Anne Aubrey remembered her fear and Newley's terror as a storm hit the aircraft: 'He wasn't the bravest man I knew. During the flight to Glasgow, there was a terrible storm and we all thought we were going to die. Tony lost it. He fell to his knees in the aisle praying. I don't know what agreement he came to, but we made it. I have never seen a man on his knees, praying like that, and in the aisle of a plane!'

The actors' biggest challenge, they decided, would be to appear at the Glasgow premiere and survive. Lodge had appeared with one of The Goons tours some years earlier and described to the cast, throughout the length of their journey north, how brutal a Glaswegian audience could be. By the time they arrived in Glasgow, despite the bagpiped welcome across the red-carpeted tarmac of the airport and the presence of the Lord Mayor, the cast firmly believed that they would be eaten alive by the audience. Lodge, acting as emcee, called his friend and Scotland's most popular comedian, Chick Murray, to see if he could help them out by sweetening the audience before the English made their entrances. Murray duly turned up, introduced the cast as his friends, 'so be nice to them,' and the audience went wild. Hollywood had come to the Gorbals. The cast came on one by one, Lodge did some funnies, Jefferies came on in character, Aubrey sashayed in while Lodge flirted, and finally came Newley. His 'thing' was commenting as the credits began to roll:

'Directed? The Director couldn't direct traffic... Photographed by? He nipped out to Boots the Chemist... Script? We made it up! Enjoy the show...'

What was clear to the audience was how much the actors seemed to be enjoying themselves. They were. Warwick was, on the whole, a happy company, the actors were 'all mates', as David Lodge said, and they had a lot of fun together. The standard of Warwick movies was consistently good and Broccoli and Allen looked after their actors, paying them well although they made them work for it. The filming schedule was so tight that shoots on different movies would often dovetail with each other, as Aubrey found to her cost. She finished one movie as a brunette and spent the night transforming herself into a bleached blonde for a new shoot the very next morning. 'What I remember about Tony most,' Aubrey later said, 'is when we were all on the set together, we laughed all the time. He enjoyed that period of his life. It was fun; we were lucky and we travelled.'

After *Idle* had opened and the promotion tours had ended, Newley and Aubrey flew to Kenya to begin filming *Adamson of Africa* with Robert Taylor. The picture follows the determined efforts of Adamson, an engineer and sharpshooter, who attempts to complete the first railroad across East Africa. He is accompanied by Aubrey's Jane (in search of her father and fiancé) and Newley's Hooky Hook, the comical English clerk. Along the way they are faced with ambush from the Warrush tribesmen, dirty tricks from the competing railway employees of Martin Boddey's sneering Gunther, in cahoots with Gregoire Aslan's evil Arab slave trader, and a whole menagerie of fearsome beasts. Taylor, who kept a veritable armoury of his own back in Los Angeles, picked off so many animals in the movie, he looked to devastate, single-handedly, the animal population of Tanganyika.

The screenplay came from the pens of four writers: Richard Maibaum, John Gilling, Earl Felton and Cyril Hume and the outcome, perhaps unsurprisingly, was an unbalanced hotchpotch that was as likely to lose its way as the characters within its plot. Taylor played it like a western, cool as ice even when targeted by a spear-throwing tribesman. Aubrey, at his side, was ready with her rifle, unflinching in the face of such horrors as man-eating lions and decapitated witch doctors (she only gives in to feminine sensibilities when she discovers her fiancé alone and quite mad). Aslan and Boddey came straight from the school of moustache-twirling villains while Newley played the little man, a sort of Charlie Chaplin on safari. Richard Thorpe, the director, evidently encouraged this comic element of the movie, creating a number of set-ups for Newley to do his stuff. Thus we see Hooky running away from a rhino, only to come face to face with a lion; when he is escorted by two tribesmen their spears continually prod him in the rear. This of course afforded

Newley the chance to ad lib appropriately. He is stripped by three native women who leave him standing in his long johns; and finally it is his raft that the hippos choose to bump, precipitating Hooky's tumble into the lake. And Newley was hilarious doing it all. So much for the serious comedian.

While on location, the production unit were suddenly forced to relocate at very short notice. Consequently the new sleeping arrangements were dreadful, with crew and actors alike sharing two-man tents. In addition there was the constant and very real danger of scorpions and elephants entering the camp. Taylor, however, was flown, each day, the sixty miles to and from his hotel. While he slumbered peacefully, Aubrey was impelled to wake at 4 am so that she could wash her hair in a bucket of rationed cold water. Conditions were not comfortable and Tony was not happy, choosing to spend all his time ensconced in his tent, losing himself in the arms of another girl. Anne couldn't even remember him coming out of his tent to eat: 'Except for one day when a snake appeared and Tony took off as fast as he could.' The sight of Newley sprinting half naked across the African plain was made more amusing when the snake, in hot pursuit, soon overtook him.

Adamson of Africa was not looking good in the roughcuts and the name was decidedly dull. In an attempt to raise its profile, Broccoli and Allen changed the title to the pointedly misleading *The Killers of Kilimanjaro*, which was not well received back in Africa. Thomas Marealle, the chief of Tanganyika's wealthy Chagga tribe was affronted at the change. He asked the Tanganyika Government to take action against Warwick, stating that the change to *Killers* had killed his enthusiasm for the film.

Another of the tribes involved with the film was the Masai. Newley was fascinated by the tall and powerful menfolk and their traditions. Between shots one day, Newley picked up out of the dust what looked like a shiny fir cone, causing a great commotion amongst the tribesmen. When he asked the native dialect expert, Eva Monley, what all the excitement was about, she explained that the cone contained magic seeds and that their witch doctor would give a goat for every one that was found. Newley smiled at the men: 'Coo... I've heard of money for old rope, but never of goats for old cones,' and tossing the cone to one of the Masai, said, 'Here, you take it, mate, they'd never let me take a goat on that charter Britannia back to England.'

On his return to England, Newley was informed that he had won the Variety Club of Great Britain's Silver Heart Award for The Most Promising Newcomer of 1959. That tickled Tony and in his acceptance speech he said, 'I've been making films since the age of fourteen and am very happy to have been discovered.'

Building on the success of the *Idle On Parade* EP Newley, now under contract to Decca, recorded a cover version of 'Personality' which had been

an American hit for Lloyd Price. The record climbed to number six. Since the beginning of May, when he first entered the charts, Newley had notched up thirty-one consecutive weeks of hit songs. That summer, Newley was what the kids wanted.

With the Variety Club award came a televised show for which Newley invited Shirley Bassey to be his guest artiste. The two got on famously, piling gag upon gag in their duet, 'If You Were the Only Girl in the World', and it was through that engagement that Newley met Bassey's agent at the time, Peter Charlesworth. The two men clicked, forming a friendship that would last forty years. Charlesworth (or PC as he was known) represented amongst others Lionel Blair and Lionel Bart and he gradually became Newley's unofficial manager, someone Tony might turn to for some impartial advice – and free advice at that. The success of the TV special prompted the theatre impresario Leslie Grade to offer Newley a summer season for the following year at the Brighton Hippodrome. Newley was keen initially but unsure about the deal that Grade had agreed with his agent, Terry Cooke. He went to PC for advice. PC knew what Tony was worth and also knew what Grade could well afford to pay. Tony told Terry to ask for more money; Grade flew into a rage with Cooke, blasting expletives down the line; Cooke rejoined that it was Charlesworth, not he, who had been advising Tony. PC realised his mistake in suggesting Tony should turn it down as Grade made his feelings clear to the young agent: 'Leslie never forgave me for that.'

Newley and PC played together as well, although Newley's absent-mindedness could at times be very trying. On one occasion Tony rang Peter to ask if he was doing anything that evening. Peter replied that he wasn't so it was decided they would go out. As they were talking, Newley suddenly heard a knock at his front door and went to answer it. The television repair man had come to fix the set, so Newley let him in and began to chat and then went to make him a cup of tea. PC, meanwhile, was still on the phone and as Newley had called him, he couldn't disconnect. Realising that Tony had quite forgotten that he had been in the middle of a call, PC bathed, shaved and dressed. He replaced the receiver, left his flat and drove to Chatsworth Court. As Newley opened the door his jaw dropped and he said, 'Oh my God!', to which PC answered, 'Would you mind putting your phone back on the hook because I can't make a phone call.'

Newley could be infuriatingly fickle too. On another outing Newley asked PC where they could go and then added, 'Where do the girls go on a Saturday night?'

'Hammersmith Palais,' suggested his friend.

Newley drew himself up to his full height and announced to PC that he couldn't possibly go there as he'd be torn apart: 'After all, I am a star.'

'Well, twinkle away,' PC replied, 'but I can arrange for it all to be very discreet.'

They drove out to the Palais in Newley's Chevrolet convertible and parked outside the main entrance. PC asked for the manager and explained that Tony Newley was in the car, wanting a quiet night out with no fuss and could they go up to the balcony without anyone knowing they were there? The manager was more than happy to oblige. Joe Loss and his orchestra were playing that evening and during one of the band's breaks, Newley and PC were invited into the band room for drinks. Newley and Loss immediately went into a huddle. After a few minutes the band returned to the stage but as PC rose to leave, he heard the emcee say, 'We have a very special friend here tonight, ladies and gentlemen: Anthony Newley!'

The audience went beserk as Newley treated them to two of his hits, perfectly accompanied by Joe Loss and the band. The quiet evening that Newley had professed to want ended with five commissionaires holding the girls back as another five surrounded Newley and PC. The pair then made, as they later named it, The Retreat from the Hammersmith Palais, with PC shouting above the din, 'You had to be a star!' The night ended for the two in a salt-beef establishment off Piccadilly.

Newley also came home from Africa to find a letter from Ann. She wanted to meet and promised that there would be no hysterics, for she was calm now. She felt as if she had been hungry for a long time: she needed food but there was none. She needed him and she was willing to wait. She suggested that they spend a weekend together, away from London, in separate rooms should Tony be concerned about jeopardising the divorce that he was now becoming keen to bring about. Newley had no such feelings of 'hunger'; he had moved on and was not about to abandon the pleasures of pastures new for what remained of his relationship with Ann.

Several thousand miles away on the Indian Ocean, Newley's songs were being piped across the deck of the P&O liner, Strathaird. Among the couples out stargazing were Leslie and Evie Bricusse, returning from their six-month round-the-world honeymoon. Bricusse immediately recognised the singer's voice and recalled that not only had he seen Newley in *Cranks* but that the two had once met through a mutual girlfriend. He decided to reacquaint himself with Newley at the first opportunity and perhaps in the process tempt him to record a few of his songs.

After the success of *Idle On Parade*, Warwick's producers were more than keen to come up with another screenplay that would accommodate Newley's pop star status and this time they created a musical comedy thriller especially for him. The script of *Jazz Boat*, from a book by Rex Reinitz based on the annual London musical spree on the river Thames, had been lying around

STOP THE WORLD

the Warwick office for several years; Newley himself had worked on it while in Brixton jail. John Antrobus developed the plot and Warwick hired Ken Hughes, Newley's director and writer from *Sammy*, to collaborate with Antrobus and direct the movie. Joe Henderson, Michael Julien and Warwick's veteran composer, Kenneth V Jones were brought in to furnish the feature with songs and a score while Sammy Cahn and Jimmy Van Heusen wrote the title track. And for the icing on the cake, Ted Heath and his band would not only record the music but would also appear in the film.

The cocktail sounded perfect but something was starting to slip at Warwick. It was increasingly noticeable that Broccoli and Allen were not as involved with the pictures they made and Allen was spending more and more time in Newmarket with his horses. The magic was perhaps beginning to fade. *Jazz Boat*, like *The Killers of Kilimanjaro*, was difficult to pigeonhole. Filmed in black and white it suggested art house movie; its explicit and random scenes of violence made it reminiscent of Brando's *The Wild One*, but in the midst of this were songs staged by Lionel Blair, turning the whole into a lesser *West Side Story*. In theory Newley had a chance to play his part, Bert Harris, straight but opted instead for humour, teaming up with Bernie Winters' gurning Jinx, leaving the grittier portrayals to Lionel Jefferies' corrupt copper, Sgt Thompson, and James Booth's malcontent, Spider.*

Tony was now openly confronting Broccoli about his need to play a straight role. Having the ability to attract large audiences, he felt confident in making demands, demands which Broccoli was not prepared to meet. On set however, Newley was as good as gold and he and the other actors were having fun. There were the constant tricks and jokes, like putting vodka in the prop coke bottles, but most were harmless. Anne Aubrey was having dancing lessons from Lionel Blair, while Tony and Lionel's sister Joyce, who was playing his on-screen girlfriend, decided to take their year-old friendship a little further.

To spice up the proceedings, there were also impromptu visits from other stars to the sets. On one occasion, Lionel Blair's friend Sammy Davis Jr popped in. Newley had been an admirer of Davis's work since first hearing a recording of the entertainer that Ann Lynn had given him as a present. He had also been introduced to Davis at the Beverly Bentley party back in New York, but it was through Lionel that the two men became friends. On seeing the movie, Davis commented that it had the best fight scene since *Bad Day at Black Rock*. But there was a skirmish to surpass even that at the movie's premiere in Manchester. As he arrived at the cinema, Newley was pounced on by an ardent fan who somehow managed to get her fingers hooked inside his

* Booth's part had originally been offered to Hollywood's new hopeful, James Darren, who with two recent hits to his name might have given Newley some competition in the film.

mouth. She brought him crashing to the ground and he began to choke. The girl was not to be dislodged and it was only after the arrival of several policemen that the extremely distressed actor was pulled inside the theatre.

After *Jazz Boat*, the same actors went straight into production on another musical comedy, *Let's Get Married*. Blatantly cashing in on the Newley phenomenon, *Let's Get Married* had started out as something quite different. Originally titled *Confessions*, Ken Taylor's novel and screenplay dealt with the stigma and consequences of being an unmarried mother when a top model discovers that she is pregnant. Warwick saw this as a chance for Anne Aubrey to shine, a serious and challenging role that would demonstrate her talents to the full. Somewhere along the way, however, it was decided that the movie might perhaps work better as a comedy. With songs.

Aubrey was convinced that it was Tony who had badgered the producers into changing their minds. It is doubtful that Newley sat in on their discussions but he was certainly instrumental in providing the songs, bringing Hackney-born composer Lionel Bart on board. This radical shift of viewpoint did not get the shoot off to a good start. And was it realistic of the producers to expect an audience to find the story of a single mother at all amusing? Under the confused direction of Peter Graham Scott the picture was scrambled together. It was a dog's dinner of a screenplay, one moment a 'kitchen sink' drama, the next a love-in for Newley. It didn't know what it was, where it was going or what it was trying to say.

Lionel Jefferies was brought in at the eleventh hour. Broccoli called him and asked him what he was doing. Jefferies replied that apart from talking to him on the phone, not a great deal. 'Well, come in and do a scene for me. We gotta have you in the movie,' urged Broccoli. There was a certain urgency in the request. The movie's title and opening credits rolled against the moody film noir image of a melancholy Aubrey walking through the mist in a park with her husky tones in the background singing, somewhat poignantly, the original title song, 'Confessions'. What followed was a disaster, neither a comedy nor a drama. It was a mess.

'Grotesque!' shouted the *Daily Mail*. 'The most bafflingly bad Newley picture I've seen,' mused the *Star* and the *Spectator* mopped up with 'If *Let's Get Married* had even the secondary sensible qualities one would be grateful. An inept British comedy it would be hard to find, with Anthony Newley, potentially one of our brighter young comedians, lost in a story, script and direction so abysmally awful that nothing need be said about them.' Where had Irving Allen been when he was needed?

At the moment Newley was sinking into the mire of bad reviews he was simultaneously sitting on top of the world in the charts. His reworking of Frankie Avalon's 'Why?' had shot to the number one spot and then, two

months later and with no little irony, he repeated that success with 'Do You Mind?', one of Bart's creations for *Let's Get Married*. This record also entered the top 100 of the US chart but was bettered by Andy Williams' cover version.

Warwick rallied after *Let's Get Married* by producing a follow-up to *Jazz Boat* which used many of the same actors. This was a comedy called *In the Nick* set in a progressive open prison, directed by Ken Hughes with songs by Lionel Bart. Newley pattered around as the dedicated young psychologist Dr Newcombe, partnered by the not inconsiderable force of Harry Andrews as the tough but fair Chief Officer. James Booth's smouldering Spider returned, as violently contemptuous as before, and Anne Aubrey, somewhat improbably, was cast as a stripper. She had the looks but did she have a gimmick? Broccoli and Allen suggested that she should do some research and offered to accompany her to a club they knew in Soho. Newley, Booth and a host of others selflessly decided to accompany her as well. Aubrey sat with pen and pad in hand taking notes chaperoned by half the males off the Warwick lot.

During the winter of '59, Newley recorded his own television series courtesy of ATV and producer Alan Tarrant. Sid Green and Dick Hills, inspired by Newley himself, came up with a six-part series that confounded the majority of its viewers. The nature of this avant garde concoction consigned it almost immediately to the nether world of the late-night slot, denying it the very audience to which it most appealed: children. *The Strange World of Gurney Slade* simply defied description and as Newley said, 'Nobody had ever seen anything like it before on British television.'

Gurney Slade is a small Somerset village which Newley passed through one night on his way to visit his close friends, Wendy and John Hannam. He thought then that it was a good name for a character. From the moment the titles faded and the first episode began, the viewers entered a strange and surreal world. In each episode Newley, as Gurney, might step out of scenes, literally walking past the cameras and film crew, talk to dogs or rubbish bins, speak gibberish with passers-by or dance with an imaginary girl and her vacuum cleaner. He constantly thinks aloud so that an audience has a chance of following the gist of the plot, as much as there is one. In one scene, Newley picks up a fist-sized rock to hurl into the Thames but just as he is about to let it go, the rock speaks to him: 'Don't do that! You know I can't swim. I'll sink like a stone.' The series had no equal nor, for that matter, any sequel. It was ahead of its time, a phrase that Newley would find himself repeating again and again about his work.

What did come out of the series was another relationship. Anneke Wills, a blonde, brown-eyed, waif-like actress and talented artist of Dutch descent, was thrilled to get a part in the series but rather daunted by the prospect of working with Anthony Newley. But the experience was 'sheer heaven'. Towards

the end of the filming schedule, she and Tony were called in to ATV to do some final dubbing. They had worked well together on the set and Wills considered herself a friend but she was not prepared for Newley's next move. As the session came to a close, Tony turned to Anneke, smiled, took her by the hand and said, 'Come on, Wills.' She couldn't refuse. Anneke went home, packed a few belongings, moved in to Chatsworth Court and 'life with Tony' began. It was also life with Tony's mum, Gracie. She would turn up at the flat each day to wash and cook for her son and, if time allowed, she would prepare a light tea for him and Anneke. Having served the couple at the dinner table, she would scuttle back to the kitchen to wash and tidy, leaving the young ones to themselves.

Broccoli and Allen organised a short variety tour for Newley, Anne Aubrey and Mike and Bernie Winters in the spring. All was quiet at Warwick with no further projects planned. There were, though, films to be publicised and money to be made out of the sell-out, twice-nightly *Anthony Newley Show*. Newley hated it. He resented being away from London and loathed having to get on the stage twice in one evening. He enjoyed the attention and the girls and the money but he felt himself to be a visitor in the pop world.

He was also feeling uneasy in himself, possessed by an inner sadness. His need to be doing something, to be creative, was matched by a sense of 'what's the point?', a sentiment he shared with anyone who would listen: 'What is there funny in the world? On the contrary, there's a lot to cry about. The Hancocks of this world are basically sad because they feel unloved. And it is because of their overwhelming desire to be loved that they are driven on to be such good artists. In the adoration of the public they find the love they need.' And perhaps never had. Newley was desperate to be loved by everybody and yet... 'Tony was a snob,' his close friend Peter Charlesworth thought, 'who didn't suffer fools easily and as far as women were concerned, could at times behave badly with a selfish disregard for anyone else's feelings other than his own.' Tony's opinion of filmmakers ranked even lower: 'Nothing worries me as much as inefficiency and money being wasted on idiots. And unfortunately every other person in the film business is an idiot.' Which of Broccoli and Allen was the other person was left unsaid.

Leslie Bricusse had met up again with Tony and they had become friends instantly, agreeing almost at once that they would try to do something together. Bricusse thought, 'It was just one of those amazing things. It has only happened twice in my life, once with Evie and then with Newley, in terms of everything being almost predestined.' At first glance they had little in common. Bricusse was middle class, Cambridge educated and happily married. He had already had a musical, *Lady at the Wheel*, produced in the West End and had spent a year starring in *An Evening With Beatrice Lillie*, after which he had determined

to write rather than perform. Under the surface they were much more compatible: 'We had the same take on everything. We had the same sense of humour.' The two men and Evie developed their own *Goons*-style language. They laughed easily and were at ease with each other, picking up where they had left off after days or weeks apart. Tony would visit the Bricusses' flat in Stanmore, making a point of calling them on his state of the art car phone. 'It was like getting a call from Mars,' Bricusse thought. 'He sounded like a rocket ship coming in.' And there the two began to throw ideas around for a piece, a show, a something. Looking for a subject they stumbled upon *The Pilgrim's Progress* and began to work on an 'attitudinal' piece called *Boy on a Wall*. They had high hopes for this and Newley even announced to the press that it was going to be a film with nine numbers. They never wrote a note of song or line of script but they had started the ball rolling.

One evening, after a show in Newcastle during the first week of the Warwick tour, Newley was introduced to Ian Fraser, who was on contract as a writer and arranger with Tony's record label Decca. A classically trained pianist and phenomenally talented musician, Fraser had already recorded with Jess Conrad and Dorothy Squires as well as recording two albums of his own. He wanted to meet up with the singer to see if they might work together. Back at Newley's hotel, Fraser threw down a copy of *Melody Maker* which he had brought with him bearing the headline, NEWLEY TO STAR IN LIONEL BART'S BLITZ!* He congratulated Tony. 'God, that asshole!' Newley blurted out. Bart and Newley had tentatively discussed the idea of writing such a show but had gone no further. As far as Newley was concerned, Bart, who went on to write the show on his own, had jumped the gun.

Fraser and Newley agreed to join forces and on the latter's return to London went into the Decca studio to record Moreau, Alguero and Wilder's 'La Montana' reworked as 'If She Should Come To You', which slipped into the charts at number six. At the same time they recorded a Bricusse song called 'A Boy Without a Girl'. As Bricusse wrote in his own coded notation, it was Fraser's task to put the melody down onto paper (the lead sheet) and then to do the arrangement. 'A Boy Without a Girl' was a 'laundry list' song, being a list of possibilities describing what a boy without a girl could be: after Newley sang the line, 'A boy without a girl is like a ship without a rudder,' Fraser suggested the next should be, 'A boy without a girl is like a cow without an udder.' This song didn't see the light of day until 1962, but a threesome had been formed, a threesome that the world might indeed one day stop to take note of.

* *Blitz!* (sans Newley) cost £50,000 to produce and ran for 500 performances but is perhaps best known for Sean Kenny's spectacular exploding set and Noël Coward's withering remark after the first performance: 'Just as long as the real thing and twice as noisy.'

Fraser arranged and musically directed every record that Newley made over the following two years. They reached number three with their irreverent adaptation of a traditional folk song 'Strawberry Fair' which Newley had a hand in writing, using his old pen name Nollie Clapton (of *Our Man Townsend* fame) on the sleeve, and the following spring they returned to number six with the passionate ballad, 'And The Heavens Cried'.

Newley's aim was always to be different. He was not interested in repeating anything and was constantly searching for something that would shock or surprise. It was a wonder that his audience could keep pace with his ever-shifting style and material, although that was not something that concerned him: 'I'm not interested in other people's ideas of what they want me to do, I wouldn't be where I am now if I'd listened to other people. Instead, I feel there is nothing I needn't do if I get my mind to it. I'm a journeyman artist. I've no illusions of grandeur. I'm just a hard worker.'

In the summer of 1960 Broccoli and Allen ended their partnership, Warwick Films closed and Newley's contract was terminated. Although he didn't miss the parts they had made him play, Newley's days were suddenly much longer but for the occasional ATV *Spectacular*. These were an excuse to surround himself with friends and colleagues such as Lionel Blair (who staged them), Joyce Blair and Keith Smith – and on one of the shows Peter Sellers turned up to provide the rhythm section. In one of his *Spectaculars* Newley did a monologue about seeing a sign which read 'All Night Engraving'. Newley looked at it and said, 'Phworr, that looks interesting,' and got a huge reaction from the studio audience. He later told Dick Vosburgh that the original sign had read 'All Night Plating and Engraving', but that he had not been allowed to use the complete phrase as it was considered far too risqué. What impressed Vosburgh was that he had somehow managed to get the same meaning into the shorter phrase and had willed the audience to see a salacious side in 'engraving'. One he did get past the studio censors was a two-line gag depending on a slang word of the time for 'fuck'. Various actors were dressed as the planets and stars positioned across a night sky painted on the studio floor. The camera zoomed in on Keith Smith, as a suitably learned astronomer's voice was heard: 'This is Orion.' The shot moved out to the exquisite features of Talitha Pol: 'And this is the *belt* of Orion,' after which the camera returned to the leering face of Smith.

The *Spectaculars* were good fun but Newley was still exacting in rehearsal and was loath to allow the director a free rein. Asking Keith or Lionel to stand in for him, he would go up to the control box to see what the director was doing and how he was being filmed. It wasn't that he didn't trust the production team, rather that he needed to know that it was being done well, it

meant that much to him. Vosburgh did a radio show in about 1960 with the Ted Heath Band which each week would include a guest star. The audience was the band.

One week they were in trouble because the man they wanted was taken suddenly drunk and I suggested Tony Newley. He sang a number with the rhythm section and he knocked them out, he really impressed them singing the standards in the easiest of ways. It's a shame because eventually he became the world's most evil Anthony Newley impersonator.

With few diversions other than guest spots on celebrity shows and an invitation from Laurence Olivier to appear in his *Night of 100 Stars*, Newley went back on the road sporadically for much of the rest of the year.

The Anthony Newley Show was one of the hottest tickets around Britain. Wherever he went he was mobbed by screaming girls who packed every venue to the rafters and yet he couldn't let himself enjoy the moment. This was not where he was meant to be. He continued working with Bricusse for no other reason than that it was great fun and, who knows, they might just hit on something. Their next attempt concerned the Second Coming of Christ, set in London's Soho, circa 1960. They soon realised that this too was a non-starter so 'had Jesus call a cab on page twenty-seven, never to be heard of again'. The would-be collaborators also shared a passion for the films of Ingmar Bergman, so much so that they both adopted part of the name addressing each other as Newberg (later Nooberg or even Noobs) and Brickman. And as Bricusse quipped, 'Because all the truly great songwriters, other than Cole Porter, were Jewish, we thought that this would maybe broaden our appeal.' The name-change also pandered to Newley's own conceit that he himself had some Jewish blood.

For entertainment he had his friends: Harry Fowler, Andrew Rae, Tommy Steele, Bobby McHugh and Kenny Lynch were all part of Newley's self-styled The Posse. They liked to think of themselves as the English Ratpack. When Fowler was to be married, the boys decided to go out to celebrate. The night was such a gas that they continued over the following two years to meet on the same day of each month, hanging out at the Astor Club or The White Elephant in Curzon Street with the general intention of getting as drunk as possible. At this point Fowler was thought of as the comedian, whereas Newley would keep his distance, often remaining an arm's length away from the action. His behaviour too could be erratic. At times he would simply up and leave without giving any excuse to his friends. They all considered him 'a strange guy'. Still, he was a mate. Newley and Kenny Lynch were once travelling together on a trip to Manchester to do a TV show when Tony suddenly

changed his mind, telling Kenny to stop the car so that he could get out. When Lynch asked why, Newley replied, 'I don't want to do this.' Accepting that he was unlikely to get Newley to reconsider, Lynch told him to hang on until they found a train station but Newley exploded, 'No, no just let me out here!' Lynch pulled over, Newley climbed out and was left standing miles from anywhere, beside the A1.

Fowler and Lynch would also be called upon to help Newley out when he had a problem that needed solving. Keeping them up all night playing Risk, Tony would ask them to put their 'cockney streetwise thought' into whatever was bothering him and when they came up with a solution or a plan of action, he'd go away, as Kipper Lynch recalled, 'and do exactly the opposite'.

Back in No. 1 Studio in Hampstead, Newley began working on a new album with Fraser. 'I've never worked so hard on a recording stint before to get what we wanted,' Newley said. What he wanted was 'something fresh – something different'. And different it was. 'Yes, We Have No Bananas' and 'Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes' received the Newley treatment, as did a little twelve bar blues number called 'Bee-Bom' (based on the *Gurney Slade* theme tune), but it was Newley and Fraser's inspired swing version of 'Pop Goes the Weasel' that gave Tony both a place in the UK top twenty and an American hit single. As with 'Strawberry Fair', Newley did not let Fraser be credited as a writer on the record even though they shared the copyright. As the sole writer of the extra lyrics Newley credited himself as George Hackney, a reference to somebody whose absence in his life was becoming an issue. Tony still wanted to discover who his father was. Perhaps the pseudonym was a way of getting a message to him – if, that is, he was still alive and at all aware of Tony's existence.

As 1961 appeared on the horizon after 'a dreary Christmas and an even drearier New Year', Newley's pop career was all that he had. It felt like an ill-fitting cloak of success that he would have preferred to leave behind in order to move on to...well, something new. His film career was sufficiently dormant for him to think seriously about moving to America. So great was his stardom that producer Bernard Delfont was determined to put him under contract, offering him a fourteen-week tour to include a summer season at the Brighton Hippodrome to do anything he liked. Tony wanted to do a revue: Newley and ten girls, performing the hits but also introducing some new material that he and Bricusse could write. For the time being though, he put off making a decision. And besides, his mind was on other things: Anneke was pregnant.

By April it was clear that no other offers to compare with Delfont's had come his way so Newley called Ian Fraser to see if he would be keen to join him in Brighton. Having been born and bred a few miles along the coast at Eastbourne, Brighton was the last place that Fraser wanted to spend his summer

STOP THE WORLD

and he was surprised that Newley was considering it. If Delfont was so keen, why couldn't they do the show in the West End? Newley went back to the producer and asked him for a theatre that summer. Delfont agreed. Newberg called Brickman immediately and suggested that they could write a fifteen-minute piece together. Bricusse was keen yet distraught. He explained to Newberg that he would have loved to have been involved but that he and Evie were leaving for New York the very next day to work on Beatrice Lillie's new show and would be gone for several weeks. Disappointed, Newley hung up. Perhaps this show wasn't such a good idea after all. A moment later the phone rang. It was Brickman: 'Evie says, why don't you come with us?'

CHAPTER SIX

GONNA BUILD A MOUNTAIN

IN THE MIDDLE OF APRIL, two weeks after Tony's sudden disappearance to New York, Ian Fraser received a letter telling him to start looking for a woman who could play Newley's wife as well as his German, Russian and American girlfriends. Tony also needed a Greek-style chorus made up of seven girls, one Indian, one African, one Swedish, one very English; a cross-section of the world's women. 'Oh,' Newley closed, 'and two young girls to play my daughters. I shall be back on the twenty-seventh of the month and have we got *work* to do!' A bewildered Fraser began scouting around.

Holed up in Beatrice Lillie's apartment, Brickman and Newberg had been hard at work. They had had no clear idea about what it was they wanted to write but there were certain things that were a great incentive to Bricusse. First, the show was definitely happening; second, Tony was a financeable star who was sure to bring in the crowds; third, perhaps this could end up substantially more than a fifteen-minute musical sketch. In Bricusse's own words, 'I knew that I wanted it to be a musical theatre piece. Newley would have probably settled for an entertainment, a show, a *Gurney Slade* with music. It could have been anything but I felt that it was a chance to get at a musical.'

Newley just wanted to be creative, to do something other than stand in front of that lonely microphone. The two worked every day, arranging their meetings around Bricusse's own schedule with Lillie's new show *Bea-ography*. Starting with the original concept of Newley and ten girls, the two men influenced and steered each other, gradually expanding the possibilities, scene by scene and character by character. Newley and ten girls. Newley (or someone like him) going through life meeting different women. An Everyman journey, through life's challenges, making mistakes along the way. Until finally: the tale of Littlechap – an ambitious teaboy who ascends the greasy slope of fortune, stepping on all along the way, to become a Noble Lord. He is forced to marry his boss's daughter, Evie, who is in the family way. A daughter arrives and then another but his longed-for son and heir dies shortly after birth. Meanwhile Littlechap travels the world and meets and beds a selection of other women (all played by the same actress) never stopping for a moment to consider what might be missing in his life or to look at himself or his behaviour. Ultimately, when he has conquered the world, he discovers that he has achieved nothing of worth; worse, that he has never truly loved anyone

except perhaps himself. As a way of finding redemption, he offers himself instead of his baby grandson to the grasping hands of death. Bricusse saw it as 'a simple little parable. It moved very well, it was funny and it had a line to it.'

Although both writers' personal experiences had informed the narrative, neither Newley nor Bricusse had been intent on or conscious of making the show autobiographical. It would be left to others to make those connections, if there were any to be made. As the piece developed, Newley began to see the potential for his various talents. He would be the star, not just as singer but as actor too. The show was a comedy but the subject was serious, weighty even and the journey of Littlechap ran the gamut of emotions. Newley would also direct and have a hand in the staging. This was going to be fun. Moreover, it was going to be his.

Having battled their way through the book, placing the song titles within, the two men began to write the musical score. They had never actually tried to write a song together and so didn't know if they could. 'Except we did know,' remembered Bricusse. 'We just sensed that we could.' Bricusse's interest in musical theatre came from the MGM musicals that he had seen as a boy, squeezing in a matinee between school and home, and to his mind there had never been a British equivalent. 'Those films had Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hart the greatest assembly of talent in every area; performers, composers, writers; everything. From my point of view, the musical was American. That was where I was coming from and that was where I wanted to go.'

Newley came from the other side of the footlights and it was his desires as a performer as much as a storyteller that guided his writing. Songwriting came easily to them. The two worked as one, building melodic lines note by note and lyrics word by word, so that it became impossible to distinguish just who had written what: two voices seamlessly alternating from one to the other. There were differences, however, in that Newley liked grand statements:

Tony was always searching for the inner being and I did put the brakes on things sometimes when I thought they became ludicrously preachy and that we would get killed for it (as indeed we did more than once). It was those areas of grand statements that I used to try and get us to avoid or, by trivialising them, make them amusing because what we were doing was not in any way intellectual. It was pretentious. If entertainment led the way rather than pretension, we were safe within reason.

Newley could see that Bricusse had a point. He confessed to lacking discipline and considered being gifted without discipline was 'a wasted gift. Leslie brought form to my passion.'

They started at the top of the show and wrote the songs in order, hardly taking time to draw breath. They worked so quickly that they could complete two songs in one sitting: sixteen songs in eight days. And it was always like that. When the two collaborated, songs would tumble out onto the page amidst gales of laughter. They complemented each other utterly. As Bricusse said, 'We had found in each other the missing creative halves of ourselves. Though few things in life are perfect, that was.'

Back at Chatsworth Court things were anything but perfect. The distance between London and New York once again seemed to afford Newley the ability to disconnect completely from Anneke, just as it had allowed him to disconnect from Ann Lynn when he had joined the cast of *Cranks* on Broadway five years earlier. His behaviour then was selfish at least if not deplorable; his treatment of Anneke, however, can only be described as cynical and utterly callous. Before Tony left for New York, Anneke had been confident that they would work something out with regard to the baby. Tony had made it clear that he would never marry her but that he would look after her and the child. She was not so concerned about the money: that had never been her primary concern and she had always made a point of paying her way. She even kept a book at Terry Cooke's office so that she wouldn't lose track of the money she owed Tony: 'I was just determined not to be looked on as a gold digger.' It was on one of her trips to Cooke's office to settle up, only a few days after Tony had gone, that everything changed. Sitting at his desk she noticed a note with her name on it. Picking it up, she read the brief memo that Cooke had made to himself after speaking to Tony earlier in the day: 'Get Wills to abort it.'

Anneke couldn't believe her eyes: 'I went nuts. I was eighteen years old. I couldn't talk to Tony and it was awful for Terry.' In a state of utter bewilderment she agreed to go ahead and terminate the pregnancy. Cooke and she visited a Harley Street surgeon the next day who arranged a consultation with a psychiatrist: 'We had to sign all the forms saying that I would commit suicide unless I had an abortion. That's the way you had to do it in those days.' Two weeks later and eighteen weeks pregnant, she was accompanied by her brother, Robin, to an exclusive nursing home in Hampstead. There she underwent an abortion by Caesarean section at a cost of £250: 'Tony paid for everything but I never talked to him. I must have just been in complete shock.' Anneke went back to Chatsworth Court but Robin offered to fix up a room for her in his new house in Spring Street, a place she could run to when Tony was away. Anneke accepted the bolt-hole and life with Tony, albeit with less certainty, continued.

Tony returned to London in early May and went straight to Delfont to tell him that *The Anthony Newley Show* was now something quite different. Delfont

immediately asked how much it would cost and was relieved to hear that by Bricusse and Newley's reckoning the show could be produced for about £6,000. Delfont agreed to look at the script there and then. After some time, the producer slowly looked up from the pages in his hands: 'I can't make head nor tail of this. You'd better put it on so I can see what it's about.'

Newley called next on Ian Fraser, thrusting the pile of typed paper into the musician's arms. Fraser was bemused: 'This is the fifteen-minute piece for the show?' Newley smiled, 'No, I'm going to do an original musical.' Fraser leafed through the script and, quite reasonably, asked that if this was a musical where was the music? Newley raised an elegant digit to his brow and tapped three times. He had the whole score in his head. The next day Fraser turned up at Chatsworth Court to be met by Gracie at the door, who introduced herself with the words, 'Would you like a cup of tea, then?'

Fraser sat at the piano and began to transfer the songs from Newley's mind onto the manuscript paper: 'It wasn't easy to work with him because there was one little impediment to hearing clear note values and pitch – his vibrato. I'd play something and he would say, "No, it's not that, it's this," and I'd say, "For Chrissake Tony, you're singing in the cracks," and we'd laugh. It was particularly difficult to do it over the phone!' Fraser would transcribe the melodies and then harmonise them but the songs were always complete when 'given' to him. Tony not only had the tune in his head, but a full orchestration. His sense of harmony too was relatively sophisticated and yet he couldn't express it without Fraser who would have to offer him a variety of choices before Newley would suddenly burst out with, 'That's it. *That's* what I want.' Occasionally Fraser would fix a few problems, suggesting an alternative melodic line if he thought it better or pointing out a moment that was perhaps too reminiscent of another song, but in general he placed on the page what Tony sang to him. Fraser's orchestrations were heavily influenced by those of Kurt Weill as he had recently researched in some depth that composer's catalogue for a Georgia Brown album. Another source of musical ideas from which Fraser unashamedly borrowed was *West Side Story*. He mimicked the horns from that show's 'Officer Krupke' number and the horn figure in 'Mumbo Jumbo' was, he confessed, 'a total steal from Lenny!'^{*}

Although he would never suggest that the songs were created by anyone other than Bricusse and Newley, Fraser knew his worth. He was the channel through which the writers' creations could flow and he played an integral part in creating a sound world for their songs. As Bricusse acknowledged, 'Ian Fraser was almost like the third corner of the triangle, he understood our style immediately. He knew where we were coming from and was a very

^{*} Leonard Bernstein, American conductor and composer of (amongst other works) *West Side Story*.

important aspect of it all.' To the public though, there were only two writers. Ian Fraser was the musical director and arranger on this show; he was not given a share of the copyright either.

While Leslie and Evie sailed across the Atlantic with Bea Lillie, Newley pushed on with casting the show. He already knew who he wanted to play his wife – his on-screen girlfriend from *Jazz Boat*, Joyce Blair. He was also keen to get her brother Lionel on board as choreographer. Both Joyce and Lionel were appearing in a revue called *And Another Thing* with Bernard Cribbins and Anna Quayle which Tony arranged to see. By the end of the performance he was certain he had found his Evie. Nipping round to Joyce and Anna's dressing room after the performance he was surprised to find that the latter had already left but took the opportunity to talk about the subject of his show with Joyce: 'You know I wrote this show with you in mind, Joycie,' he began, and glancing across at the debris-strewn table on the other side of the room continued, 'but I want to offer the part to Anna.'

Quayle's aquiline and towering presence had transfixed Newley throughout the show. She had also written her own material which stood out as being quirky and individual. She was interesting, curious and looked a million dollars. Joyce couldn't help but agree that it was inspired casting, as Anna 'made him look like Littlechap'. Newley tracked Anna down to her brother's home in Cornwall and sent off a telegram with the simple message, 'Will you be my leading lady?' Quayle was amazed and returned hastily to London to meet him to say 'Yes!'

Anneke accompanied Tony to the auditions and spent long weekends with him and the Bricusses in Stanmore when the men were working on the piece. She also played an important part in finding a replacement for Lionel Blair after he had declined an invitation to choreograph the show, saying he didn't understand it and wouldn't have known where to start. Anneke suggested John Broome, who had been her movement teacher at RADA, and then came up with her friend Kiki Byrne for costume designer. Byrne's partner, Sean Kenny, Britain's leading designer of the time and fresh from his triumph with Lionel Bart's *Oliver*, was already on board to design the set and lighting. Tony discovered a pretty pair of twins – Jennifer and Susan Baker – to play his daughters while the rest of the cast, all of whom were teenage girls, were auditioned and contracted within a week. As soon as Bricusse arrived back in England the company went into rehearsal and from a list that included *False Teeth For Everyone*, Delfont finally chose a title: *Stop the World – I Want To Get Off*.

What Bricusse wanted from *Stop the World* was to showcase all of Newley's different talents, 'and that's why it took the form it did because we knew he could do all these things: it was his debut as a musical theatre songwriter; it

was his debut on the musical theatre stage; it was his debut as a director and he heavily influenced the choreography. It was as near as you could get to a one man show.' He also had his finger in the design. The concept was similar to *Cranks* in that the set remained unchanged throughout and the actors only had one costume. The pantomimic scenes were also redolent of that show. And like Cranko, Tony wanted every aspect of the show to begin and end with the performers.

The original description of the set, written on the script, suggested three areas on stage: a rocky outcrop to the left where the chorus could observe the action and, on the right, a revolving platform supporting a giant egg that would light up and become translucent whenever a birth took place. In the middle stood a tree upon which Littlechap would hang a bud to suggest the beginning of life. The bud would grow into a leaf which would wither and then fall to the ground: the cycle of life. When Sean Kenny showed Newley the model of his egg, Newley was unimpressed: 'Sean, it doesn't look like an egg.' So Kenny returned the next day with another model to which Newley responded in the same way. This routine went on for several days, driving Kenny to distraction: 'Okay, okay, I'll bring you back the best fucking egg you ever saw!' He never did; instead, fifteen eggs later, he produced a model of a circus ring with surrounding bleachers and stated in his Irish brogue, 'I think it ought all to take place in a circus tent.' Newley almost choked, 'Sean, you're not going to put me in whiteface. Man as a clown is the oldest, dullest gag in show business.' But faced with the choice between a stylish circus or a bad egg, Newley succumbed. Newley later heard that the circus design had allegedly been rejected by Peter Coe some years earlier and that Kenny had been trying to get rid of it ever since.

In rehearsal Newley, a great admirer of Marcel Marceau, introduced mime into the action, developing a lengthy sequence representing birth at the beginning of the show. He worked easily with the other actors and encouraged their ideas and comments but was selective about who could sit in on their work. Newley attracted a lot of interest from friends and colleagues alike and there was a never-ending line of would-be visitors to the rehearsal space. He was always sweet with his friends but refused to allow them to stay, saying, 'Sorry, we're working,' as he guided them to the door. The few he allowed to remain, like Delfont, were often utterly bewildered by the whole thing and some actively disliked it. Three weeks into rehearsals, Newley was walking down Shaftesbury Avenue during a lunch break, when he bumped into Peter Charlesworth and Lionel Blair. He asked them if they would care to see a run-through of the second act that afternoon. The two accepted readily but were confused by what they saw. On leaving the rehearsal room, they looked at each other as if to say, 'What the hell was all that about?' Both were sure it would not last five minutes in the West End.

The show began its brief pre-West End tour in Nottingham where the cast gave a special performance for disc jockeys and the like who were voraciously chasing all things Newley. The songs, a few of which had been released prior to the tour, were being given a great deal of airtime. David Merrick, the recalcitrant American producer who was getting a reputation for importing inexpensive British shows, also caught the show in Nottingham. Declaring that he had been thoroughly entertained and absorbed by the 'freshness of conception shown by the authors', he bought the US rights there and then, promising to take the show to Broadway as soon as it had finished its London run (this would be Delfont's debut production on the Great White Way). He was also impressed by the show's star and told eager reporters, 'I have no doubts at all that Mr Newley is going to enjoy widespread and durable success in America. The man does everything – he acts well, he sings with individuality and verve, and most importantly he is an exceptionally attractive performer. His personality is dynamic and he projects a brilliance of spirit.'

Bricusse and Newley continued to work on the piece as they moved to Manchester, the last venue before London, although they didn't alter a note of the songs, and only changed one lyric. At the end of the show, as he ponders the ultimate superficiality of his successes, Littlechap sings:

Why can't I fall in love till I don't give a damn?
And maybe then I'll know what kind of fool I am.

Undoubtedly the character's emotional situation demanded such a line but both Bricusse and Newley were forced to think again. 'Damn' was simply too strong a word for many of the radio stations to broadcast. A compromise was made, one that Bricusse would never learn to love. For the recording they would rewrite the lyric as:

Why can't I fall in love like any other man?
And maybe then I'll know what kind of fool I am.

This change resulted in a false rhyme which offended Bricusse: 'I hate false rhymes.' For the theatre performances both lyrics were used: 'man' in the first chorus and 'damn' in the last without garnering a single complaint.

Newley had a strict regime before each performance. He would work out vocally for forty-five minutes and then do a twenty-minute physical warm-up. He was feeling fitter than he could ever remember having felt before and his voice, always a light tenor, now had hints of a deeper and darker quality. It was stronger too and his range was increasing. This hour of preparation was exclusive 'Newley time' where he focused entirely on the show, his performance and the opening mime. His focus was shattered one evening in Manchester when a man shouted from the back of the stalls just as Newley

STOP THE WORLD

was unfurling from the foetal position, 'Ello, 'ello. What 'ave we 'ere?' Newley looked up, dead-eyed, at Anna; the hallowed moment had been blighted for him. But nothing ever stopped him performing 'absolutely perfectly' as far as his leading lady was concerned: 'He was a man of the theatre and he came fully equipped to be able to do the job. He was bursting with talent. He had a Dan Leno quality and at that stage he had a break in his voice that was very appealing and attractive and yearning and old-fashioned. He was really something special.' Quayle also recognised that Newley was an intensely private man, and standing under the stage each night, listening to him sing 'What Kind of Fool Am I?', she couldn't help but wonder how much of Newley there was in Littlechap. Like Jean Cocteau's description of Marlene Dietrich, Quayle considered Tony Newley also 'a sacred monster'.

While in Manchester one of the show's most distinctive elements was belatedly introduced. Bricusse, Newley and Fraser were sitting out in the stalls watching a run-through with Newley's stand-in, when they all agreed that there something else was needed at certain moments throughout the piece. Bricusse suddenly suggested that Littlechap might literally stop the show to talk directly to the audience. Newley loved the idea and the two wrote the necessary dialogue that followed Littlechap's numerous cries of 'Stop the world!'

Sitting out watching the show as director had been Newley's main occupation during the rehearsal period and it was with some trepidation that he had first stepped onto the stage in Nottingham. He wasn't ready. As Fraser commented, 'Tony had been so busy directing that I think he had forgotten that he was starring as well.' Newley agreed, 'I was too busy rushing around telling other people where to stand.' John Broome set to work and he and Newley rehearsed madly as the company headed for London.

On 20 July 1961, *Stop the World - I Want to Get Off* opened at the Queen's Theatre on Shaftesbury Avenue. From their first tentative scribblings in New York to their first audience in the West End, the whole process had taken Bricusse and Newley only thirteen weeks.

The reactions of the critics were decidedly mixed: some declared it a new form of show, ingenious and inspired, while others thought it vacuous, lacking in real substance, and one found it 'little short of embarrassing'. But it was Kenneth Tynan who was most opprobrious: 'The evening is Mr Newley's: his the laurels, his the thorns. The verdict, I fear, must be thorns.' Listing all things in the theatre which he could most easily do without, he continued, 'To be theatrically interesting, Everyman must be Someone, not just Anyone.' He thought it 'a sad pretentious evening, visually monotonous and redeemed only by glimmers of potentiality from Mr Newley.' This slightest of compliments was at once vitiated with his final remark on Newley's performance: 'One man in his time plays many parts but not all on the same

night.' The *Sunday Times* caught something else about Littlechap: 'Behind Mr Newley's deadpan mask, shine the wide eyes of a little boy lost. A little boy, I quickly add, with a splendidly alert eye and ear for the absurd, and a wicked sense of fun.' Surely this was a review, albeit unwittingly, of the man and not the actor.

The audiences nevertheless were bowled over, including Peter Charlesworth who had attended the evening with no little trepidation after his experience in the rehearsal room: 'I was completely wrong because I had not reckoned with Newley's extraordinary performance which made it a revolutionary show, completely different from anything that had ever been seen on the British stage.' At a time when revues filled the West End, when Noël Coward was struggling to hold onto his audience, when the successes of Julian Slade and Sandy Wilson were fading into the distance and the year-old *Oliver* was the only successful representative of the British musical, *Stop the World* was seen to be wholly innovative and very exciting. It was a much-needed and extremely fresh breath of air. Whatever the critics thought of the show, they were unanimous in their praise of Newley's talent and dexterity, although one or two began to think he was a mite overambitious and had perhaps 'undertaken too much'. The audience didn't think so: his was a stellar performance of dazzling virtuosity and exquisite intensity.

And then there were the songs. Of the show's sixteen numbers, five would become classics of the musical stage: 'Gonna Build a Mountain', 'Typically English', 'Once in a Lifetime', 'Someone Nice Like You' and 'What Kind of Fool Am I?', together receiving the recognition from hundreds of artists in as many recordings.* Sixteen songs in eight days; as Bricusse recalled: 'All that I know is that I still have the piece of paper with "Once In A Lifetime" on one side and "What Kind Of Fool Am I?" on the other. That was how fast we went.'

Bernard Delfont had a hit. A smash hit. The audiences packed the theatre and the money flowed in. From its original budget of £6,500, *Stop the World* would go on to earn the producer over one million pounds, the first of Delfont's shows to do so. Brickman and Newberg didn't do badly out of it either, taking ten per cent of the gross between them, and that was on top of Newley's fees as director and star.

The first night had proved a difficult experience for one member of the audience. Newley had encouraged his estranged wife Ann to attend the performance, perhaps oblivious to the memories and pain it might reawaken. To her mind, the show was a retelling of their own story from their 'shotgun' marriage to the death of their son. William Franklyn accompanied her that evening and remembered Annie's fingers digging into his arm when moments

* Recording artists as diverse as Oscar Peterson, Bill Evans, Art Blakey, James Brown, Plácido Domingo, Mantovani, John Coltrane, Perry Como, Bobby Darin, Marvin Gaye, Astrud Gilberto, Milt Jackson, The Monkees, Van Morrison, Dusty Springfield, Mel Tormé and Mariah Carey.

STOP THE WORLD

that she and Tony had had together seemed to be represented in the play: 'It was an emotionally traumatic evening for both of us. There was I watching a buddy of mine whilst his rather crumbling bride was sitting next to me in tears.' To Ann it appeared that Tony was at last unburdening himself of some of his feelings about the trauma that they had shared. He hadn't been there when the baby was born and he hadn't held it so he could 'kind of shove it away, but it still meant something to him because he wrote that show. I do think he was quite cruel and did not understand how much I was suffering.'

As the hottest ticket in town, the show attracted its fair share of celebrities and contemporary composers. Julian More, who co-wrote *Irma La Douce*, one of the very few British shows that had made it to Broadway a year earlier, felt more than comfortable with the writers' intentions:

We as a generation were tremendously influenced by American musicals and we really wanted to do something popular, good theatre and really classy. Breaking the class barriers of musicals. A lot of people thought *Stop the World* was pretentious but what's wrong with that? If something breaks new ground then people often think it's pretentious. And nobody hates success like the Brits. The thing is that in breaking new ground it probably did stop the West End.

Some came away feeling that they knew a great deal more about Anthony Newley than they had done before, but that this 'giant ego trip', in the words of Julian Slade, 'was forgivable on account of the fact that Newley was extremely brilliant. That's why it worked.' The composer of *Salad Days* thought it 'quite unlike anything else that came before it'. It was a revolutionary type of musical play that 'didn't set a trend at all'. What it did have – and this was something that few British musicals had achieved previously – were musical numbers that came out of the dramatic situation and therefore were integral to the piece, but which could also be considered legitimate popular songs. They were show songs that became chart-topping hits which was both unusual and enviable.

Olivier came backstage and Tony Hancock, who saw the show five times, cried each time as Newley sang 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' A clue that Newley's first love had visited was found in a message lipsticked on his mirror proclaiming: 'Dors woz ere.' Lionel Blair brought Sammy Davis Jr, who was currently appearing in his own show at the Prince of Wales Theatre. Davis was won over both by the show and Newley's performance and immediately asked Newley if he would mind if he sang 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' in his own act. Mind?! Permission was granted and Davis asked Ian Fraser to put together an arrangement. The next day Fraser delivered it to Sammy who told him to 'see Murphy' (his valet and tour manager) about remuneration.

At Decca, Fraser had been used to a fee of £20 per arrangement and had seen Delfont 'go through the roof' when he demanded £100 per week to conduct the show. Murphy on the other hand produced a wad of five pound notes and before Fraser had time to mention a figure, silently began to hand them to the musician one by one. After £125 had been pressed into his hand Fraser cracked, 'Stop. Stop.' Had he not interrupted the flow he presumed Murphy, not wanting to offend the Englishman, would have continued adding to the pile. Either that or he was expecting to pay whatever Sammy was used to paying Nelson Riddle and other arrangers back in the States. Fraser was more than happy with his reward.

Sammy went to see the show several more times and could often be found standing in the wings of the Queen's watching the last few minutes of Tony's performance, having dashed from the Prince of Wales where his own show had come down some fifteen minutes earlier. Newley repaid the compliment by creeping into the wings of the Prince of Wales unannounced during a late show, where he surprised and delighted Davis by adding an off-stage obligato line to Davis's own rendition of 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' During Davis's stay in London, he and Newley saw a lot of each other and a close friendship was formed. There were many similarities between the two. Both had come from desperately poor backgrounds and both had been raised by a single parent, Davis's father in his case. Each had been a child performer and both were prodigiously multi-talented: Davis a dancer, singer, actor, mimic and musician; Newley a writer, composer, singer, actor and director. Both had had to overcome the prejudices against them: Newley for being an illegitimate cockney from the slums of London but Davis far more so, for being black in the unforgiving apartheid of the States. Perhaps, most of all, they mirrored each other's individuality. There was no one to compare them with for their ability, style and idiosyncratic stage persona – except, that is, with each other. They were both unique.

Sammy returned home having made new friends and having collected several equally new songs which he immediately took into the recording studio. In Newley he had also found a fresh personality to impersonate in his act, a turn that would be picked up by almost every mimic and comedian on the circuit in the course of the following twenty years. Davis's cover of 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' went on to sell a million copies the following year, outstripping Newley's own American hit with the same song. Bricusse and Newley, the composers, were to Davis what Kander and Ebb were to Liza Minelli, and what Cahn and Van Heusen were to Sinatra. That meant that their songs were never touched by Sinatra because, as Bricusse reasoned, 'He knew that Sammy had adopted us.' That didn't bother Newley who at the time thought that Sinatra gave little of himself in performance. Davis found his

voice in their songs, and why not? The songs had been part-written by a Littlechap for a Littlechap, and what if not a Littlechap was Sammy Davis? Before long, 'Gonna Build a Mountain', 'Once In a Lifetime' and 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' were as well known in New York and the dinner lounges of the cabaret circuit as they were in London. This prepared the way for the show's arrival on Broadway in 1962 and it was all thanks to Davis.

'What Kind of Fool Am I?' won the Broadcast Music Incorporated award for the finest popular song of the year. In that season's Ivor Novello Awards, *Stop the World* won Best Score while the Best Song category was won by 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' Newley was invited to sing at the ceremony and Ian Fraser set to work on an arrangement for the event with the additional task of shortening the song so that it would fit into the schedule. He and Tony agreed a cut that halved the third chorus and rehearsed this on the day. Come the evening, Katie Boyle announced Newley, Fraser launched into a specially written sweeping introduction that took in all parts of the show's score and Newley walked out onto the stage in front of the cameras which were broadcasting the evening live. As they came to the cut Newley continued the song as though he were in the show but realised his mistake straightway. Fraser couldn't hear him, but a brief look into the monitor and the terror now apparent in Tony's eyes left him in no doubt that something was awry. Tony then compounded the error by trying to jump to the correct place in the song. The winner of the 1962 Ivor Novello Award for Best Song included the lyric 'What kind of man is this who never fell in love' repeated and distorted in myriad ways to fit a whole chorus and finale to the song. After it had come to an end and Mr Leslie Bricusse had been invited onto the stage, the audience were treated to the sight of an ashen-faced Newley backing away from his partner and friend in the certain belief that the only reason he was approaching him was to hit him.

As the run progressed, the show came to be identified with Newley rather than with Newley and Bricusse: 'It was more his than it was mine in that he was the star of it, and that he directed it and conceptually he ultimately gave more to it than I did. I didn't have to get up and do it eight times a week; he did.' The performances were never dull. Tony never did the same show twice; there was always a little nuance and Ian Fraser acknowledged that part of the fun of working with him was that it was never quite the same. Backstage Newley was equally inventive in trying to capture the attention of one of the Baker twins. He had made his interest known to the sixteen-year-old who began to return his advances in the wings away from the gaze of the sisters' ever present chaperone. There were whisperings around the theatre and jokes about Tony leaving a trail of lollipops along the corridor leading to his room. At the same time a TV advertisement summed up the ribaldry amongst the

other girls. Promoting a hair perm with the brand name Toni, and featuring a pair of twins, the ad's motto ran: 'Which twin has the Toni?'

In the middle of August and after a show, Newley had two unknown and unexpected visitors. The movie actress Joan Collins was back in England co-starring with Bob Hope and Bing Crosby in *Road to Hong Kong*.^{*} The American actor Robert J Wagner, who was also in town, had managed to get two tickets to *Stop the World* and invited Joan to join him. She was completely enthralled by the show and especially by Tony's performance. She remembered him from *Oliver Twist* and *Vice Versa* and suddenly recalled that as a young girl she had even had a picture of him in one of her film scrapbooks. At the end of the performance she suggested to Wagner that they might go backstage to say hello. They got past the doorman with ease but found Tony's dresser and minder, Terry, less than welcoming. He grudgingly allowed entrance into the 'Young Master's' outer dressing room where they were left to sit for nearly twenty minutes. Eventually Collins and Wagner had had enough and announced their decision to leave. At once Newley appeared from behind the curtain that divided the room and apologised for keeping them waiting. Introductions were made and with ruffled feathers smoothed, the three actors agreed to dine together. Their conversation, amidst the noise and bustle of an Italian bistro, was animated with liberal scatterings from Newley of 'pretty lady' and 'flower' directed at Collins.

Some days later, Joyce Blair visited Joan at Shepperton and relayed Tony's comments to her about this meeting. It seemed to Joyce that he 'fancied Joan like mad'. She continued that she knew he had never been in love but that he was a 'super person'. With Joan evidently curious and not indifferent to another meeting, Joyce decided to play matchmaker and arranged to take Tony for lunch at the studios where she could reintroduce the couple. This time they really clicked and immediately arranged another date. After three weeks they became lovers. Newley had allegedly already made love to the American actress Linda Christian earlier in the morning before he visited a flu-ridden Collins but that didn't deter him when he found Joan lying in bed. Too weak to resist, Collins succumbed, although she had the sneaking feeling that it was the challenge of bedding a girl that drove Newley on and not necessarily the act itself: 'There are some men who love making love and there are some men who enjoy the conquest.' Newley, she felt, was one of the latter. But, leaving for the theatre, Tony couldn't help but feel that Joanie was perhaps something special after all.

Tony decided that his relationship with Anneke must stop. It would be awkward, to put it mildly, should Joan discover that he already had a live-in

^{*} *Road to Hong Kong* was the seventh and last of the Crosby and Hope 'Road' movies that had started out some twenty-one years earlier (and a good deal fresher) with *Road to Singapore* in 1940.

girlfriend. Returning to the flat one night he announced to Anneke that 'it was over'. She moved out the next morning but couldn't stay away for long. On the pretext of collecting a few of her belongings, Anneke returned and begged him to take her back. While in the flat she noticed the newly framed photographs of Joan that were lying on his bed and realised then that he had met someone else. Diving into the kitchen she grabbed what turned out to be a butter knife and threatened to kill herself. Tony was unmoved: 'Don't be silly, darling. I'll call you a taxi.' As Anneke broke down, Tony, seemingly detached from the situation, gently but firmly calmed her down. 'No raging Wills. No shouting.' For her, life with Tony looked to have come to an end.

Keen to keep working, Newley began to look for other projects. He and Brickman started work on a new musical, provisionally titled *Mr Fat and Mr Thin*, about two tramps in an apocalyptic landscape playing 'the game'. They met each day before the evening show in the circle bar of the theatre overlooking Shaftesbury Avenue. Newley also reconnected with the director and writer Ken Hughes and discussed the possibility of turning *Sammy*, the BBC drama from 1958, into a full length feature film. Within weeks Hughes had got Frank Godwin interested and a provisional shooting date was set for the summer, neatly filling the gap between Newley's departure from *Stop the World* in London and the show's October pre-Broadway tour. He and Bricusse had also written a forty-minute political and social satire of their own called *The Johnny Darling Show* which was broadcast live on the BBC that November featuring the likes of John Le Mesurier, Hugh Paddick, and Anna Quayle. This was, in essence, another outing for Gurney Slade, this time in the disguise of teen idol Johnny Darling, *né* Herbert Nebbish.

The story charts the mid-show crisis of Darling who, on hearing a voice from above prophesying the world's imminent end, begins to see the futility of his work and the capricious nature of the business and of the fans who follow him. With piquant resonance aplenty (the title track 'D-Darling' only managed to rise to number twenty-five during its six weeks in the charts), the voice describes him as, 'A singer without a voice in a career without a future in a world without much hope.' Darling is then transported into a dark surreal world where he embarks on a journey through his own mind, questioning *en route* the mores and morals of everyone from politicians to pop stars and psychiatrists to socialists. After various references to Newley's own life, such as his failure to do National Service, Darling reawakens to find himself back on the set of his TV show, singing his latest hit as he was before he heard the voice. On finishing the number he steps to the camera saying, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, I'd like to sing for you my... I'd like to sing... I'd like to but there isn't much time.' And like Gurney and Littlechap before him he promptly walks off the stage and out of shot. The show was very much a play, topped

and tailed by two Bricusse songs, arranged by Ian Fraser. The dialogue, a cocktail of Brecht meets Beckett meets music hall meets Peter Cook, came thick and fast and dealt with the question of who was going to govern the world or whether there would be a world to govern.

Newley and Bricusse wanted to change radically how TV was both used and viewed. 'There are not enough people writing for the telly as a medium on its own,' mused Newley. 'They don't have the energy to approach it as anything but an illegitimate child of the cinema or a jumped-up version of the stage.' For Newley this entry into the homes of millions via the set in the corner should be used 'properly'.

By Christmas Newley, Joan and the Bricusses had become inseparable. They spent a weekend together in Paris, although it had taken some persuasion to get Tony to quit London. Christmas was passed at Stanmore where 'The Famous Four', as they had dubbed themselves, exchanged over 130 presents, photographing every moment as the day wore on. Joan was clearly besotted with Tony and he appeared to return her feelings. He had told her that he was in love with her and had even begun the process of divorcing Ann Lynn. Lynn still had hopes that they might get back together as the two had been seeing each other on and off up until Tony had begun work on *Stop the World*. Those hopes were dashed when he described Joan as 'a mate'. Beyond being his lover and wife, a 'mate' was what Ann had always hoped she could be. She agreed to the divorce.

Meanwhile, Newley was still paying calls on Anneke from time to time, usually at night, after the show. Stepping out of his car on Spring Street, he would stand below her window and whistle until she responded by opening the door to welcome him in. At the theatre he chased Miss Baker, the impossibility of the situation making the challenge all the more enjoyable.

His relationship with Joan became the unlikely topic for a question raised in the House of Commons that February. The Honourable Member for Gillingham, Mr F Burden, complained about Mr Newley and Miss Collins's behaviour at London Airport where they had repeatedly flouted airport regulations. On 3 January Newley managed to walk on to the runway to see Collins off to Switzerland. On 24 January he used, without permission, a private lounge to see her off to Los Angeles and most impressively in February he gave airport officials an assumed name, that of George Hackney; the officials then escorted him down the back stairs and out of a side door so that he could once again make his farewells at the door of the plane. Burden remarked that 'this sort of thing creates resentment among ordinary air travellers'.

Tony took a fortnight's vacation from the show in May and The Famous Four flew to Los Angeles to base themselves in Joan's new apartment in Hollywood Hills. Allowing himself a break from his relentless professional

STOP THE WORLD

and personal schedule back in London, Tony immediately fell ill. After three days of nursing him better, the four began to explore the city, Polaroid cameras in hand. Collins and Brickman shared a similar belief in that what one can cram into a day is the measure of what one's life is about: 'Joan and I could organise ourselves to death,' revealed Bricusse, 'and one thing I do know is that I've always had more fun than Tony. He was a strangely old man as a young man, he had eye masks and blankets; it was like travelling with your grandfather.' Joan called him 'Old Crusty'. A visit to Las Vegas found them enjoying the hospitality of Sammy Davis Jr who was continuing to spread the word of *Stop the World*'s imminent arrival in New York and was confident that Newley would knock 'em dead on Broadway.

They returned to London and Joan left Tony in no doubt of her intentions: she loved him, she wanted to marry him and she wanted to have children. Tony was uncertain. He wasn't keen about having children or getting married again and did he really love Joan? He contented himself with the thought that the divorce would take an age to go through so no hasty decisions needed to be made.

As July approached, Tony Tanner was rehearsed into the role of Littlechap. Newley had little to do with the process, only working with his replacement on one or two occasions, leading Tanner to believe that The Young Master was caught in the 'I want him to be good so the show will go on, but not too good in case some people say he was better than me' syndrome. This did not ring true with Anna Quayle. She knew that Newley would always recognise the worth of another artist and that there was nothing in his body that was jealous. Tanner was encouraged by the one reviewer who saw his first show and suggested that what the audience might lose on the swings, they would assuredly gain on the roundabouts. The show ran for a further six months and finally closed after 556 performances. Newley would later say, 'There have been three major revelations in my life. The first was in 1949 when I went into the Army and I fell to pieces. The second was in 1956 when I went to prison and didn't fall to pieces. The third was the success of *Stop the World* and finding myself accepted. I learned a lot about myself from those experiences.'

Before Newley left the show, he, Bricusse and Ian Fraser paid a weekend visit to New York to hold auditions for the Broadway cast. In the two and a half days between their arrival one Sunday morning and their return to London for the following Tuesday's performance, they saw almost seven hundred girls. During the group auditions, Fraser kept a mental tally of who sang what. Of the seven hundred hopefuls, two hundred sang 'I Enjoy Being a Girl' from Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Flower Drum Song*. Pity the lass who opened her mouth last.



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown

TOP TO BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Tony and Gracie (1932);
Look at that face... (1933); First car; Hackney Marshes (1938)

Photographer unknown



Newley / Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University



Photographer unknown / S Adoni



Photographer unknown / S Adoni



TOP TO BOTTOM (L TO R): George Kirby (1930s); Oswald Street (1940s);
The journey begins... – *Dusty Bates*; ...and continues – *Vice Versa*

Photographer unknown / S Adoni



Photographer unknown / Carlton



TOP: The Artful Dodger and his mum
BOTTOM: In the David Lean classic *Oliver Twist* with Alec Guinness

Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University



Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University



Denis de Marney



Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University

TOP TO BOTTOM (L TO R): 22312441 Private Newley A.; May Queen Ceremony, Dewsbury; Annie Ross, Hugh Bryant and Gilbert Vernon join Newley in *Cranks*

Photographer unknown / S Adami



Carlton / Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University



Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University



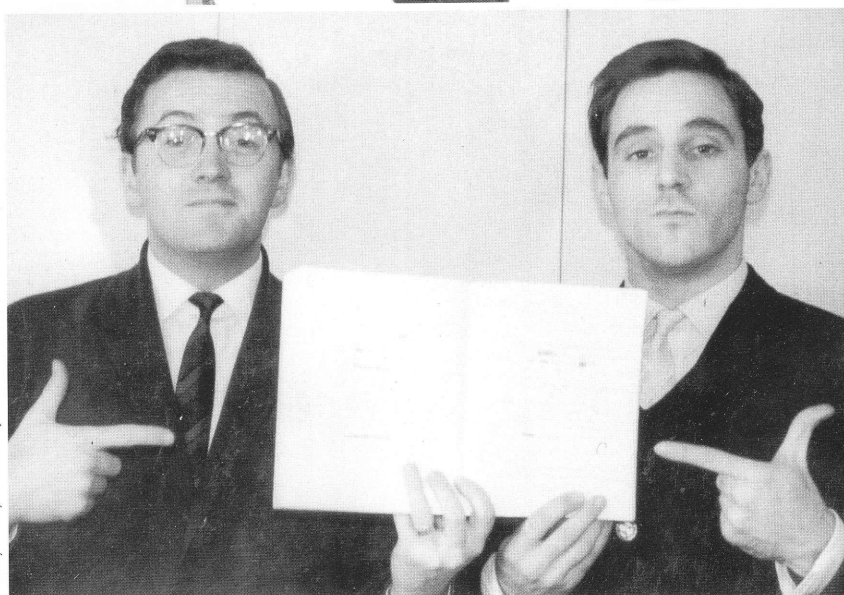
Photographer unknown / A Wills



TOP TO BOTTOM (L TO R): Ann Lynn and Tony on their wedding day; Una Stubbs and her vacuum cleaner join Tony in *The Strange World of Gurney Slade*; Flying high with Warwick Films – Tony with Lionel Jefferies, Anne Aubrey and David Lodge; Anneke Wills



Photographer unknown / Ian Fraser



Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University

TOP: Tony with guitarist Judd Proctor and Ian Fraser at the piano during the recording of 'You're Free' BOTTOM: Brickman and Newberg stop the world

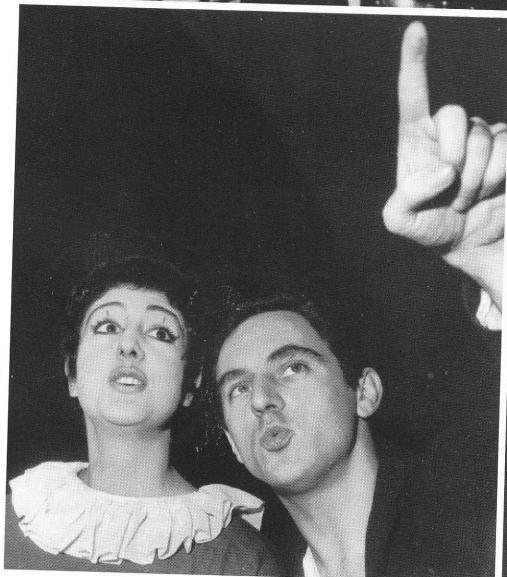
Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University



Photographer unknown / Leslie Bricusse



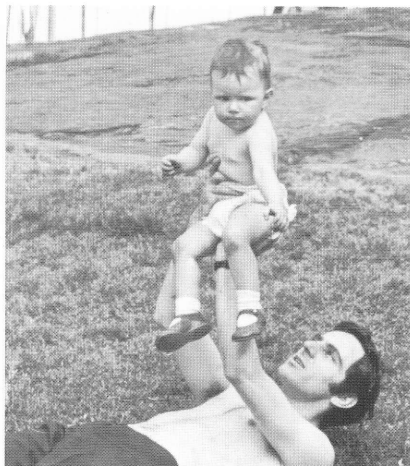
Photographer unknown / Ian Fraser



Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University

TOP TO BOTTOM (L TO R): Which twin has the Tony?; Celebrating 300 performances of *Stop the World* with Anna Quayle, Lionel Blair and Bricusse; Anna Quayle and Tony; Littlechaps: Tony and Sammy Davis Jr

Anthony Howarth



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown / Bricusse



Photographer unknown

TOP TO BOTTOM (L TO R): Tony and Joan in St Moritz; Having fun with Tara in Central Park; The Famous Four; A roaring party with Joan, Tommy Steele, Barbra Streisand and David Merrick

The summer months were taken up with filming *The Small Sad World of Sammy Lee* (the *Sad* was dropped before the film's release). The general feeling amongst the company was that they were making a rather important film – the *Look Back in Anger* of London's Soho, perhaps. The seedy, unseen world of the original monologue was now brought to life by such present and future luminaries as Robert Stephens, Miriam Karlin, Wilfred Bramble and Warren Mitchell and there was the added spice of being able to see the striptease joint where Sammy now worked. A newcomer on the scene was seventeen-year-old Julia Foster, fresh from her first appearance on screen in Peter Glenville's *Term of Trial* in which she played opposite Laurence Olivier. She was cast as Patsy, an innocent from the north who comes to London to find Sammy and her fortune; the original choice had bowed out after reading the script and seeing that there was a fair amount of nudity and a couple of love scenes. Foster accepted at once: this was, after all, her first leading role, and she had been assured that a body double would replace her for the strip scenes.

Foster found Newley to be very nervy on set, forever pacing, 'like a panther'. He was never still and his mind seemed to be always pacing as well. The charm and warmth that she had heard so much about were missing; instead he seemed self-absorbed and jumpy, which made him difficult to work with. He did little to encourage the young actress or to put her at her ease, rarely sharing his thoughts on their scenes together or indeed about how he might play them. Ken Hughes too was tough with the young actress. A somewhat dictatorial director, he would regularly reduce her to tears by being generally unpleasant. Years later, Foster challenged Hughes on his meanness toward her on the set and was shocked to hear him declare that he behaved like that on purpose. When asked why, he explained gleefully to her that it had made her more vulnerable. Perhaps he and Newley were conspiring against her for a greater good. They clearly got on very well, and were almost a double act at times. What was apparent to the actress was just how significant the film was to Newley. He had a lot riding on it, having not been seen on the screen for nearly two years. Moreover, Sammy was the part that he had been longing for throughout his time with Warwick. Now he had a chance to prove his worth as a serious film actor.

Newley's apparent aloofness was not mitigated by the presence of Joan Collins who never left his side, a state of affairs that at times upset Julia Foster. She had been warned about Newley's proclivity for young girls and couldn't help feeling that that was why Joanie stuck around. Perhaps she was chaperoning him. By the end of filming Julia adored him and thought he was 'wonderful and eccentric and odd and different'. She saw that there was always much more going on with him, much more than just being an actor. 'More complicated perhaps. There was a very dark side to him. I really think that he thought this film would make him an enormous film star.'

When it came to their love scenes, certain rules had to be adhered to. To satisfy the British censors, Tony had to leave one foot on the floor, a nicety that wasn't necessary for the international market. 'So we did two versions,' remembered Julia. 'One which we called the continental version, which sounds awfully risqué, and the English version.' On the day scheduled for Patsy's strip scene, Julia happened to be on set as her body double arrived in costume. Foster was horrified. The girl looked dreadful and in no way doubled anything except perhaps her size. After ringing her agent and sobbing on various shoulders, she swallowed her pride, and decided to play the scene herself. Talking to Tony about this episode some days later, she was taken aback by his suggestion that Hughes had deliberately hired the ugly double and had orchestrated Foster's presence on the set, thereby prompting her to do the strip herself. Foster sighed, 'Oh Tony, they wouldn't do something like that.' With a knowing smile, Newley sang back, 'Oh yes they wo-uld.'

In one of the opening scenes Sammy, in his bedsit, is calling for his pet cat: 'Oscar! Oscar! Here puss, Oscar!' Hughes and Newley fell about laughing, declaring that they would never get away with such a blatant demand for an award. The scene stayed in.

As filming ended and Newley prepared for his trip to New York he seemed to be standing atop the strange, small and stopped worlds of Gurney, Sammy and Littlechap. He was a pop star, an acclaimed actor appearing in an award-winning West End show that he had both written and directed. He was a TV celebrity and he had just made a major movie. He had new-found wealth and he was dating one of the world's most beautiful women who just happened to be a film star as well. He was his own boss and could confidently look to a future with 'No more Guv'ners'. In short he was everything that Littlechap had set out to be. And yet, like Littlechap, there was something missing. Talking to the *Daily Express* columnist, Herbert Kretzmer, Newley suddenly opened up: 'There must be a hole in a man who gets up on a stage and cries: Look at me! Look at me!' He continued,

I am still a paramount egotist forever watching myself. I am always aware of myself and the impression I make crossing a road, entering a room, leaving it, being recognised, being admired. I am also searingly aware of being disliked and rejected. Why? Why do I find life so ugly at times? Let me put it this way. Supposing a baby had no father and a working-class mother. The kid needs all the attention he can get, all the affection. He works for it. He was born with an engaging little face and nothing more. So he uses his cuteness to get love. It is a device. The process continues throughout his life, into maturity. He sharpens and hones that ability until it is an art. He uses it as the key to something he never had. It is a craving. Acting when you boil it down, is just a plea for approval, for love.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE BEAUTIFUL LAND

TONY JOINED THE NEW YORK CAST of *Stop the World* to rehearse for the Philadelphia opening while Joan, Evie and Leslie took a trip to Jamaica. Ian Fraser, who was Musical Supervisor on the show (Milton Rosenstock was the Musical Director) had already had a run-in with the show's producer, David Merrick, by the time of Newley's arrival. With Merrick's approval, Fraser had revised and re-orchestrated the show's score to ensure that it would be fresh for Broadway, but having heard that Merrick was 'a villain' and not to be trusted, had insisted that his fee and the cost of copying were to be paid in full before he left England. As his trip to New York approached, Merrick's cheque failed to materialise but on the day prior to Fraser's departure, a message from the producer's office guaranteed that it would arrive the next day. Fraser duly went to London Airport but before boarding the plane called his agent to see if the guarantee had been fulfilled. No cheque had arrived. After a moment's deliberation, Fraser deposited the score in a locker, posted the key and a hastily written note to his agent and boarded the plane. At the company's first rehearsal on the following Monday morning, Fraser, empty-handed, met Merrick who was accompanied as ever by his henchmen.

'Where's the music?' demanded the producer. As nonchalantly as he could, Fraser responded, 'You didn't pay for it.' Merrick's face fell. 'Well, ya brought it, didn't ya?' he shouted. 'No. I left it in London,' Fraser replied. Breaking the deathly silence that had filled the room, Fraser turned to the kids and began to teach them the opening chorus. Merrick walked out and a few hours later the cheque arrived.

During rehearsals Newley's passion for the Baker twin had been reawakened. At the same time his feelings for Joan seemed to have cooled and her arrival in Philadelphia, although initially a cause for celebration, soon became awkward and uncomfortable. The two spent an unhappy fortnight either fighting or ignoring each other. Bricusse assured Joanie that it was all due to Tony's nerves but Joan was unconvinced. She flew back to Los Angeles with her hopes of marriage apparently in tatters; but she promised to attend the first night on Broadway.

By the autumn of '62, Vic Damone and Robert Goulet were just two of twenty-five or so other singers who had joined Sammy Davis with their individual recordings of 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' (The song would go on

to win that year's Grammy Award for Best Song.) Sammy, meanwhile, had released 'Once in a Lifetime' and Newley's original recording was also getting its fair share of airtime. The result of this was that half of Manhattan was humming the show's main tunes as the company moved in to the somewhat dilapidated Sam S Shubert Theatre. After the post-war novelty of the Queen's the Shubert was, the company decided, a slum.

Following the Broadway opening of *Stop the World* on 3 October, Newley, Joan, the Bricusses, Sean Kenny, Paul and Joanne Newman and Tony's friend from *Cranks* days, Michael Lipton, gathered in Newley's suite at the Navarro Hotel on Central Park South to wait for the notices. This time, come what may, nobody was leaving.

The first three reviews were bad. Walter Kerr thought the show 'less fun than a circus', while the *NY Mirror* suggested that it was the kind of piece that one was likely to love to loathe and, 'Frankly, we can take it or leave it, mostly leave it.' Howard Taubman jumped on Kenneth Tynan's bandwagon, declaring the show 'commonplace and repetitious', its substance 'banal' and its freshness 'no more than skin deep and its satire not even that deep'. The group felt suicidal. An hour later however, another three reviews arrived that lauded the show, its writers and the performers. According to the *Journal*, Newley was 'a most gifted artisan' and the *New York Post* thought him 'a splendid performer'. Anna Quayle received her own plaudits and the *World-Telegram* summed up the feeling that there was 'brilliance to *Stop the World*, any way you look at it'. The advance ticket sales had been good, averaging \$17,000 a day at the box office, but even with this fillip, Brickman and Newberg couldn't help but wonder how long their stay in New York would be.

Their answer came the very next day when a queue formed outside the theatre and continued around the block. Hundreds upon hundreds of people were lining up for tickets. The interest in the show was based on the popularity of the songs and, having seen that the show had now opened, people were starting to queue. The length of the line outside the theatre was partly effected by Merrick's ploy of opening only one of the two box office windows available. It might have been irritating for the public who were waiting, but a crowd outside the theatre was a great advertisement for the show.

Merrick was never at a loss for an idea to promote a show. He was determined to place a paragraph from each of the notices in the press advertisements but was struggling to find two consecutive sentences that were printable from the Taubman review. In a moment of inspired chutzpah that revealed once again his feelings towards hostile critics, he had a paragraph translated into Greek. Taubman's paper, *The Times*, refused to run the ad and the waiter who had translated the piece warned Merrick that there would be few Greek waiters who would want to queue for tickets after reading that

review. It didn't matter: the show was an instant success and the advance bookings continued to mount. *Stop the World* looked set to stay on Broadway for some time to come and on the back of its success, Merrick sent out a concurrent touring production. Within a year, Merrick saw a \$700,000 return on his initial investment of \$75,000.

Newley cast Joel Grey and Julie Newmar for the tour, and directed the new company during the day before performing the show himself each evening. Grey found Newley generous in allowing him to create the role afresh. He considered Newley an expert actor, singer and performer, 'a unique being', and for the as-yet-unestablished actor the part was a godsend: 'I'm eternally grateful for *Stop the World*. It was a stepping stone for me and a real opportunity to deepen "the work" as it asked a great deal of the actor. In many ways it led to me doing *Cabaret* because Hal Prince saw me in it and the whiteface characters of Littlechap and Emcee were very similar.'

Newley, meanwhile, began to make New York his own, appearing on every TV variety show including *The Ed Sullivan Show* and Jack Paar's *Tonight Show*. Celebrities came in their droves to the theatre and made the pilgrimage to his dressing room. Amongst those to put in an appearance were Gene Kelly, Kim Novak, Judy Holiday and his co-star from Warwick, Victor Mature. Mature saw the show a number of times and on one occasion, some months into the run, accosted Newley in his dressing room. Mature, observing how the show had developed since his last visit and genuinely concerned that some of the changes were not for the better, pleaded with Tony to put it back as it was when he first saw it.

With Newley tied to the show, Bricusse and he found it increasingly difficult to schedule work time together. This was a problem that would blight their partnership throughout the years they collaborated, but was wholly unavoidable if Newley was to continue starring in their creations. 'Once he got into a long running show like *Stop the World*,' recalled Bricusse, 'he didn't want to write at the same time. So I would go off and write something else.' In the spring of '62, the composer Cyril Ornadel invited Bricusse to collaborate with him on Bernard Delfont's latest project, *Pickwick*. Wolf Mankowitz had adapted Dickens' first novel and Harry Secombe was to play the corpulent hero. Come the summer, while Newley was filming *The Small World of Sammy Lee*, the Bricusses and the Ornadels were working and playing together on the French and Italian Riviera. After *Stop the World* had opened at the Shubert, Bricusse returned to England to continue his work on *Pickwick* in preparation for a July premiere in London.

Three weeks after the first night of *Stop the World*, Joan wrote to Tony telling him that it was a crucial time for them both. She was convinced that their relationship could and should work and was willing to do anything to

make it work. She was certain that what they had was too precious to be destroyed by two dreadful weeks in Philadelphia. Tony was certainly missing her – he had told Evie that he still loved her but he seemed incapable of making a decision. Nevertheless he was buoyed up by the thought that at least Joanie still loved him.

It came as a surprise therefore when Joan was seen out and about in New York some days later with another English actor, Terence Stamp. If Newley had needed an outside influence to bring him to his senses, then this was it and he began to 'phone the now reticent Joan and to follow her around town. After some persuasion, she finally agreed that they should talk. On a bench in Central Park, with shoulders hunched against the cold November wind, the two discussed their future. Tony talked about his relationship with the Baker twin and admitted to having a fascination with younger girls (or 'Lolita nymphets', as Joan put it). He didn't know if he was in love with Joan but he did think that he couldn't live without her. He had been miserable, 'fucking miserable!' knowing she was seeing someone else; he then rather ingenuously added, 'Flower, I don't think I can remain faithful.' Joan wondered whether it was foolish of her to want to marry a man who had just admitted such a thing and yet she still loved him and found herself admiring his honesty. After all, wasn't he merely putting into words what she already knew about men? Grabbing the moment, Joan gave Tony an ultimatum: either they get married and have children or they should break up. He had a week in which to make up his mind.

Michael Lipton was with Tony two days later when they walked into the Stork Club after the show to find Joan there with some friends. Comedian Fat Jack Leonard was performing and as Newley and Lipton made their way to the table the band struck up with some melodies from *Stop the World*. Inviting Newley onto the stage, Leonard began some banter: 'Gee kid, it's kinda hard to get seats for your show. Do you think you could get me two seats?' Tony volleyed his return, 'You'll *need* two seats!' After a few more gags, Fat Jack Leonard asked Newley to sing and the band immediately played the intro to 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' Tony looked across at Joan and sang the whole song to her and as Lipton remembered, 'You knew he was so vulnerable and so open, so sad and so in love.'

Afterwards Tony and Michael joined Joan and her female friend and the four decided to move to the Top of the Sixes restaurant on Fifth Avenue for a late supper. Tony then invited them to his suite at the Navarro. Joan's friend declined and said goodnight but quietly took Michael aside and informed him that Joan did not want to be left alone with Tony. Once in Tony's suite Michael could see that Tony wanted him to leave but could also see that Joan wanted him to stay. The three friends chatted as Joan sipped hot chocolate

and eventually she made up her mind to go home. Tony accompanied her to the lobby, telling Michael that he wouldn't be long.

When he returned some forty minutes later, Lipton challenged him, 'If it's just the matter of a girl, then you don't need Joan.'

'No. She's special,' Tony replied and, trailing off, he continued, 'special beyond...' Lipton called the hotel the next day, only to be advised by the desk clerk that Mr Newley had checked out. He and Joan had moved into an apartment together at The Imperial House on 69th Street. Michael was amazed: 'Suddenly they were back together again.' Another day later, seated on the same bench in Central Park, Tony asked Joan to marry him.

At the end of the year, Ian Fraser replaced Rosenstock as Musical Director on *Stop the World*. He had originally gone to New York on a seven-week deal to get the show up and running, but having separated from his wife in England, he decided to make a fresh start and stay in America. Merrick helped him acquire a work permit and employed him as a walker.* A short while after taking over in the pit, Fraser noticed that Newley was forgetting lines on a regular basis and therefore having to ad lib (a talent for which he demonstrated a particular aptitude). On one particular evening he fluffed a line and failing to come up with an alternative, stopped speaking altogether. After a moment of tense silence, Fraser gave him the line but Newley just looked at him. Fraser tried again, more urgently but this time Newley smiled and shouted back at him, 'What did you say?' Without bothering to reply, Fraser picked up the script lying next to his music stand and threw it up onto the stage. Newley looked down and, completely unfazed, said simply, 'Thanks.'

As the weeks passed and while they were waiting for his divorce from Ann Lynn to come through, Joan and Tony started to decorate and furnish the apartment. Tony found Joan's avid interest in astrology infectious and soon learned that, according to the charts, a Libra and Gemini together were the worst of couplings. He wasn't surprised. Despite his need to be in the limelight, he was placid, unadventurous, a homebody and uncomfortable with people other than his close friends. Joan on the other hand was extroverted, energetic, mercurial and inexhaustible. As Tony would later say, 'Joan is the maypole around which we all dance.'

Tony bought a Lincoln Continental which he described as the acme of American motoring and Joan bought an Abyssinian cat called Fred. Sundays were spent cooking English roasts for friends after which they would watch

* The Shubert Theatre had a quota of twenty-one musicians that it was obliged to employ; however, the orchestra for *Stop the World* only numbered sixteen. Consequently, five standby musicians or 'walkers' (including Fraser) would appear at the stage door once a week to collect their cheques without lifting a baton or sounding a note.

movies or play board games. Their apartment overlooked a convent and one of Newley's cherished amusements, when he didn't have his nose buried in his dictionary collecting words, was to watch the nuns, habits tucked into culottes, doing their exercises in the adjoining yard.

In March, Joan announced that she was expecting a baby. This changed everything. With Joan's pregnancy now cited as grounds for the divorce, they could expect the whole process to be completed within a matter of weeks. On 26 April Tony wrote in his diary: 'All Hell breaks loose! The divorce came through in England and the press opened up at the crack of dawn and continued all through the day. They are waiting for me at the theatre and I had to brush one off me in the alley.' He agreed to a post-marital settlement with Ann, a weekly payment of £60 – which to his deep resentment and anger she went on receiving until his death some thirty-six years later. 'It's something about me that I am quite shocked about,' Lynn admitted later. 'I didn't think I deserved it but it was there and I took it.'

Newley had made another agreement some time earlier with Anneke; he had agreed to stay away from her. In the early summer of 1962, she had told Tony that she was once again carrying his child but that this time she was intent on keeping it. She made it clear to him that she had decided to look after the baby by herself and that he was no longer needed: 'I said, "Okay. This is my gift. This has nothing to do with you." As it were it became *mine*, this was *my* baby.'

Newley was only too happy to oblige. Anneke moved out of Spring Street and lived for a time with Peter and Wendy Cook before renting a room in actor Michael Gough's house to 'make a nest' for her baby. He and she had worked together the year before in an Edgar Wallace thriller, *Candidate for Murder* and had become friends but as the pregnancy progressed, they found their friendship turn into something deeper. Polly Wills was born on 14 January 1963 in Charing Cross Hospital. Ecstatically happy, Anneke wrote to Tony in New York filling the letter with biro sketches of her baby and telling him in detail every moment of the birth. She reiterated that she wanted nothing from him and went on to thank him for giving her this wonderful gift. A few weeks later she wrote again. An officer from the Department of Social Security had visited her and had asked for information about Polly's father. Anneke reassured Tony that she was not about to disclose his name nor would she in the future. She had what she wanted and for that matter so did Newley: believing himself off the hook, he failed to reply and simply filed the letters away.

At the end of April '63, with the divorce out of the way and Joan expecting her baby the following October, she and Tony decided to marry as soon as possible. They chose a weekend in May and booked into Sardi's in Connecticut where they would be married on the Sunday with Joan's great friend Cappy

Badrutt as Maid of Honour and Michael Lipton and Arnold Weissberger as Best Man and witness respectively. Tony would miss the Monday performance but return to New York on the Tuesday. On the Saturday morning, Joan turned to Tony and said that he couldn't sleep at their flat that night and should find an hotel. Newley complained bitterly, saying he hated to be alone but bowed to Joan's decree and called Michael Lipton who agreed to spend the night with him. Newley asked his secretary to book a double suite under a false name at the Waldorf. After the evening show and dinner at the Coq Basque, Joan, Tony and Michael went to the Waldorf to check in. Joan sat in the lobby while the two men approached the reception.

The manager took one look at the male couple, each clutching an overnight bag and said, 'Ah yes, Mr Brown. Two singles,' and allocated them two rooms that were separated by several floors.

'Er, no,' Newley responded. 'My secretary booked a suite.'

The manager was insistent. 'I'm sorry, sir, but there's nothing available other than two singles.'

Newley turned to Lipton who, having already guessed that the manager suspected them to be lovers, was giggling madly. Defeated, the pair collected Joan and returned to Imperial House. The next morning Weissberger arrived in the limo and the wedding party set out for Connecticut. However, Tony's sudden and baleful cry, 'Oh my God! I've forgotten the licence!' saw them returning to Manhattan within an hour. With the licence retrieved and with no more incidents en route, they arrived at Sardi's and were married by a minister whose flies remained open throughout the ceremony.

Back at the Shubert, the relationship between Ian Fraser and David Merrick was far from blissful. By midsummer the audiences had dwindled, mostly due to a heat wave, and to save money Merrick turned off the air conditioning in the theatre. With so few in the auditorium the temperature there remained bearable; in the pit, however, it was like an oven. Fraser repeatedly asked the management to turn the air conditioning back on but each day was met with a flat refusal. After an uncomfortable week, Fraser decided to take things into his own hands. On the Saturday evening he stepped into the pit as usual and waited for his spotlight. As the beam of brilliant white hit him, Fraser put down his baton and began to undress. Off came his jacket, his tie and his shirt until all the audience could see was a man in the pit wearing nothing more than a vest. He picked up the baton and commenced the overture. Twenty minutes into the show, a theatre employee appeared behind the orchestra and crept towards Fraser.

'Mr Merrick says, "Will you please put your jacket back on?"', whispered the messenger.

'I will when Mr Merrick turns the air conditioning back on,' answered a defiant Fraser.

During the intermission, Merrick sent one of his hatchet men backstage to address the problem. It was simple: either Fraser dressed himself properly or he would be fired.

Fraser saw red and, leaving the room, barked, 'Tell Mr Merrick that I am dressing according to the heat in the pit.' As the band finished the first number of the second act, a cool breeze played across the pit; an indication that the air conditioning had kicked back into life. Silently victorious, Fraser slipped his shirt and jacket back on and continued. On the following Monday night as he entered the pit, the band presented him with a plaque, upon which were stuck a pith helmet, a thermometer and some salt tablets and the emblazoned words 'The Albert Schweitzer Award'. Fraser realised that Merrick was a bully, but he had made a crucial discovery: 'If you shouted back at him he liked you.'

At the same time, the Newleys had taken a house in Montauk on Long Island and had invited the Bricusses to spend a month with them. The plan was that Tony would commute to the theatre each evening and return after the show to spend the next day relaxing on the beach, reading the newspapers and playing games. Once together, however, Brickman and Newberg began to look around for a little divertissement to while away the hours. What grabbed their attention was a sex scandal unfolding in England. John Profumo, the British Government's Secretary of State for War, had been having an affair with call girl Christine Keeler, who was also sleeping with Russian Naval Attaché and suspected spy Captain Eugene Ivanov. The press had gone wild, printing story upon increasingly lurid story as the scandal gripped the country. Brickman and Newberg thought the events perfect material for some sort of satire and decided to record a comic album for which they would write some sketches. On a Sunday evening in the RCA Victor studio, Tony, Joan and Leslie were joined by Peter Sellers, Daniel Massey and Michael Lipton to record *Fool Britannia* in front of a celebrity audience that included Vivien Leigh, Sammy Davis Jr and Sybil Burton. Sellers's considerable talents were prominent, as he had appropriated all the big roles during rehearsal, leaving Lipton and Massey with the little fill-ins. Michael took exception to Sellers's attitude and considered him 'a pompous ass' and an 'arrogant sonofabitch'. Still, the script was funny, revolving around such gags as Britain's Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, reworking his famous line: 'When I said you never had it so good, I didn't mean *that* good!' The LP sat in the UK charts for ten weeks and reached the top ten – an impressive conclusion to what was little more than a seaside whimsy.

Stop the World - I Want to Get Off garnered five nominations for the Tony Awards that year, of which Newley received three: one for Best Actor in a Musical and another two with Bricusse for Best Musical Author and Best Composer and Lyricist; however, it was Stephen Sondheim's *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum* that won the day. Zero Mostel picked up the Best Actor award and Newley's designer Sean Kenny won Best Design for his work on Lionel Bart's *Oliver* which had opened in January. It was left to Anna Quayle to collect the Best Actress Award for her performance in *Stop the World*, to which Newley responded in quavering tones: 'I've created a monster.' In the same month the reviews appeared for *The Small World of Sammy Lee*, all of which commended Newley's performance,* especially *Variety* which described the film as 'a first class vehicle for the taut talents of Anthony Newley'. Merrick's prediction of Newley's widespread success in America was beginning to be realised.

Newley and Bricusse were approached by Pan Arts producer Arthur P Jacobs (APJac to his friends) and his partner Jerome Hellman, who were keen to make a film of *Stop the World*. Bricusse was enthusiastic about the idea but Newley seemed less interested and turned the offer down. Bricusse implored him to reconsider: 'You'll have it for ever.' But the prospect of two weeks playing the show by night (a duty which he was enjoying less and less) and filming the movie by day was anathema to Newley. He regretted his decision later. As Bricusse said, 'He was thirty-one years old, he could have done that.'

On 12 October 1963, Tara Cynara Newley was born. Earlier in the day, Newley had called Joel Grey who was now back in town, the tour having finished, and asked him if he could do the matinee as Joan had gone into labour. Grey agreed and turned up at the theatre to perform, unrehearsed, with Anna Quayle, whom he hardly knew. The arrival of Tara heightened Newley's longing for England as well as his fear of the New York streets. He and Joan had an enviable social life and Tony was undeniably a Broadway star, yet his need to return to London was growing each day. The assassination of President Kennedy affected him greatly. This was no place to raise a child, and he and Joan made the decision to leave New York as soon as the show closed. That December, Tony sent out handmade Christmas cards. At first glance the picture on the front was that of Christ in a typical pose. On closer inspection the recipient could see that the figure was made up of ripped-out headlines and articles from the *New York Times*, cuttings which recorded the endemic violence of the city.

* The London critics had been equally favourable, with the *Evening Standard* declaring Newley to be 'Magnificent!'

STOP THE WORLD



Merry Christmas...Newley-style

During the holiday, Tony met with Anneke. She was in New York while accompanying Michael Gough on a three-month US tour of *The Hollow Crown*. Having secretly contacted Newley on arrival, the two arranged to meet. They chatted amiably and easily over dinner, swapping stories about parenthood and sharing photos of Polly and Tara. It was the closest that Tony ever came to meeting his other daughter and as for Polly, she would never discover that her real father was Newley. Nineteen years later, on 9 December 1982, driving home from a night out with her fiancé and friends, Polly's small car hit a patch of ice on a lonely Norfolk lane which caused it to leave the road and somersault into a water filled ditch. She and her friend were discovered hours later having drowned in the upturned car. Anneke never told Tony of the accident – why should she? He had never acknowledged Polly as his daughter, let alone offered her any financial help. As he had done countless times before and would continue to do throughout his life, Newley blanked out the portions of his story that were unpalatable or uncomfortable (or both). It was as if Polly had never happened and if she had, she was certainly nothing to do with him. He had apparently filed away the whole episode along with Anneke's letters.

When the show closed on 2 February 1964 after 556 performances, the Newleys were already packed to leave. They couldn't return to England directly, however, having registered as non-residents for the year to avoid paying UK taxes. The earliest they could set foot on English soil was April and so they decided to take a trip to Paris. Their sojourn in that city was cut short when a fire engulfed their hotel one night. Tony awoke with a start to the sound of breaking glass and nudged Joan awake. On opening the door to the hall, the gravity of their predicament became instantly apparent. There was smoke everywhere. Tony slammed the door shut and Joan, terrified, ran through the living room to the second bedroom where Tara was asleep. There was smoke in there too but miraculously it had not descended to the floor and was hovering with sinister intent, like a black cloak above the baby's cot. Grabbing the child she retraced her steps back to the bedroom and threw on some clothes. Joan made another incursion into the now foggy living room to retrieve her mink, jewellery and Tara's bottled milk. Standing out on the balcony it was clear that the fire was two floors above them but spreading fast. People were screaming overhead and below and yet there was little activity from the rescue services. Tony suddenly climbed onto the balustrade and, stepping onto the ledge, set out around the corner of the building. After several interminable minutes he returned with bloodied hands and blackened face to report that the fire was in the elevator shaft, travelling downwards and as far as he could make out they were trapped. Clinging together they waited for what seemed an age. Hearing an almighty crash behind them, they turned to see two firemen wearing masks and breathing apparatus standing in the doorway, the door at their feet. The men shouted for them to cover their heads with wet towels and to get down on their knees. One fireman took Tara and the party crawled out of the room and along the baking floor of the hallway. The smoke was suffocating and all around them ash and plaster were falling like heavy snow. They finally reached the stairway and above the tremendous noise, the firemen screamed at them to run down.

'Tony was my knight in shining armour,' Joan recalled. 'I felt he would probably have died for Tara and me.' The next day, in search of a safe haven, the Newley family left France without a second thought, and travelled to St Moritz where Cappy Badrutt was now living. There they played and worked. During the days, Tony left Joan to socialise while he spent the majority of his time in their hotel room writing, filling the time before they could go home.

Back in London they rented Keith Michel's house and Brickman and Newberg, having been starved of each other's company and influence for several months, set to work with alacrity resurrecting *Mr Fat and Mr Thin*. Here was another 'big' theme. It received a big title too, becoming *The Roar of the Greasepaint - The Smell of the Crowd* (Lionel Bart, in contrast, favoured

the monosyllabic eponym: *Oliver, Blitz!* and *Twang!*) Coming after the 'seven ages of man' presented in *Stop the World, Greasepaint* tackled the iniquities and injustices of life, society and the class system and presented them as 'The Game'. The two protagonists attempt to win 'The Game', using whatever means are available to them, however devious and cruel. The whole drama is played out on an oversized board in a post-war wasteland, observed and commented upon by a 'Greek chorus' made up of street urchins.

Before they had got very far with the script, Newley and Bricusse received an invitation from John Barry to write the title song lyrics for the third James Bond movie, *Goldfinger*. The producers, Harry Saltzman and Newley's former boss, Cubby Broccoli, tended to use songwriters who were currently fashionable; Lionel Bart had written the title track for the previous movie, *From Russia With Love*. Bricusse was acquainted with John Barry, so he and Newley visited the composer at his home in Cadogan Square. They sat down as Barry went to the piano to play them the melody. He took a breath and pounded out the three note opening theme that would underpin the title. Newberg and Brickman however were reminded of a rather famous Mancini/Mercer creation and, without a hint of a glance towards each other, both answered the three notes with 'wider than a mile'.

Barry was furious. 'No, No! It's harmonically different,' he protested.

Suitably chastened, Newley and Bricusse left humming the tune. Stuck with the name *Goldfinger* and a very short melody, they pervaded the lyric with as many references to gold as they could possibly think of. Newley cut an impressive demo using his inestimable gift as a singer/songwriter to bring the lyrics to life. He went on to release his own recording with some success but it was Shirley Bassey who 'sang its brains out', as Bricusse fondly remembered, and etched the song indelibly on the public's psyche. Bricusse wrote two more Bond songs with Barry, including 'You Only Live Twice' and 'Mr Kiss Kiss Bang Bang'. The latter was dropped at the eleventh hour by the producers who decided to stay with title-based lyrics; since by then Bricusse was unavailable, Barry teamed up with Don Black to create 'Thunderball'.

Joan was busy keeping house in Hampstead and was simultaneously scouting around the countryside in search of a property that she and Tony could buy. Now that they were back in England the Newleys had every intention of staying. She was also expecting their second child. Eventually she came across an Edwardian mansion out in Elstree called Friars Mead which she fell in love with at once. Its elegant three storey façade, numerous outbuildings and extensive gardens were perfect in every way other than repair. Looking at the price-tag of £20,000, and aware that it would cost a good deal more before they would be able to move in, Tony was less than keen about the house but was convinced of its worth by Joan. They bought it

and she immediately set to work employing architects and interior designers to transform Friars Mead into a home.

Back at Keith Michel's house on the heath, Bricusse and Newley were hard at work on *Greasepaint*. Delfont had guaranteed a pre-London tour for the autumn, so every spare moment was spent in closed rooms putting the piece together. On one afternoon, Joan was finding space for all their belongings that had come out of storage at Harrods and the whole house was in chaos; reckoning the bathroom to be the only comparatively peaceful place, the writers locked themselves inside; Newley sat in the bath tub while Bricusse sat on the toilet. Out of these less than salubrious surroundings came one of the team's most celebrated songs. 'Who Can I Turn To?' would do for *Greasepaint* what the equally questing 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' did for *Stop the World*.

Both songs would later appear in Alan Jay Lerner's compilation book of *Broadway's Greatest Songs*. Lerner sent a copy of the book to Bricusse and inscribed it:

Dear Leslie,
To whom can I turn?
Love Alan

Bricusse retaliated by commenting in verse on Lerner's own misuse of the English language in *My Fair Lady*:

Dear Alan,
By rights you should be taken out and hanged,
For the cold blooded murder of the English tangle.
Love Leslie

Bricusse later speculated that had they been sitting the other way around, with Newley on the toilet and himself in the bath, then perhaps, 'we might have written, "To Whom Can I Turn?"'!

Bricusse and Newley's approach to their collaboration had changed somewhat since their month together three years previously in New York. There was now a clear distinction between who did what. Once they had decided what songs were needed and where they were to be placed in the show, the writers would discuss the sentiment and nature of each number. Newley would then compose a melody, writing a dummy lyric at the same time, which would be replaced by Bricusse once he received the finished tune. Each had their own method of composing; Tony would blow the notes out of a 'notated' mouth organ, transferring each note onto the page, while Bricusse had invented his own coded nomenclature based on the scale of C major. This new *modus operandi* did not prohibit either writer from making

suggestions or alterations to the other's work. On one occasion Bricusse had good reason to want to change a Newley creation. When composing the melody for 'Who Can I Turn To?', Newley had unwittingly lifted the opening phrase from a song called 'The Birth Of A Baby' that Bricusse had just written for his own show *Noah's Ark*. However, when Bricusse heard the whole song they agreed it should stay. 'Who Can I Turn To?' found its slot in the show at the end of Act One but was never as powerful as the eleven o'clock number from *Stop The World*. In Bricusse's words, 'For me it never had quite the same tingle, because "Who Can I Turn To?" is ultimately a little bit self-pitying. Whereas "What Kind Of Fool Am I?" is a very dramatic examination of... "I've really fucked up".'

There was another change in their collaboration that Bricusse felt less comfortable with, although he was sympathetic. Newley had decided at the end of *Stop the World* in New York that he no longer wanted to perform. He had told friends repeatedly that he hated doing eight shows a week and, indeed, that he hated performing in itself. He recognised, of course, that there were moments on stage when he felt euphoric and all-conquering, but these were matched by episodes of deep insecurity when his intense fear of failure and of not being accepted by the audience utterly consumed him. He also found the day-long process of preparation for and execution of each performance exhausting and having 'spilled blood' in *Stop the World*, he now wanted to concentrate on writing and directing.

Once they had completed the lyrics and book, Newley flew to New York to work with Ian Fraser. Beyond putting the songs down, Fraser had little to do with this show and Peter Knight arranged the score in England. One day, while transcribing the score, Fraser and Newley were talking about wives and lovers, a conversation which ended with Fraser's claim that in any case, there was no such thing as love. Then his eyes lit up and he suggested that there might be song in that. Finding time between *Greasepaint* sessions, Fraser penned the tune, Newley wrote the lyrics and with typical celerity booked them both into RCA to make and immediately release a recording of 'There's No Such Thing As Love'. While at the studio, Newley decided that the song needed one final couplet. He went into a phone booth to get some peace and quiet to write the required lyrics. After about ten minutes he came out smiling, couplet in hand:

Cos since you said goodbye
You left me high and dry,
You left me here to sigh
there's no such thing as love.

'To this day, I swear he called Bricusse,' averred Fraser.

Newley returned to London to cast and rehearse *Greasepaint*. In 1964 Norman Wisdom, who was enjoying considerable success as both a comic actor in a variety of stage and screen farces and as a popular singer, seemed to represent the perfect alternative to Newley. In addition, his screen persona – that of the downtrodden, ‘loveable’ little chap – made him ideal casting for the role of Mr Thin, now renamed Cocky. The role of his counterpart, the superior and highly corrupt Sir (Mr Fat) was finally given to Willoughby Goddard. This part had proved a little more tricky to fill: Brickman and Newberg’s ideal Sir was the rotund British actor Robert Morley, but on a visit to his home they discovered that ‘he didn’t have a musical bone in his body’. Rex Harrison was ‘surprisingly nice’, remembered Bricusse, when he received the writers in his suite at the Connaught Hotel, but he declined their offer. Newley then called up Lionel Jefferies who protested over the telephone that he couldn’t sing. ‘Yes, you can. Come in,’ demanded Newley.

Newley jumped up to meet his old friend from the Warwick days with open arms as he arrived for the audition at the Prince of Wales Theatre. He asked his friend if he had prepared anything.

‘No. I told you, I can’t sing,’ Jefferies replied.

‘Well, think of something you know,’ suggested Newley.

‘What about “If You Were the Only Girl in the World”?’ Jefferies answered reluctantly.

‘Great!’

Jefferies looked hopefully toward the pianist who launched into an introduction to the song but stopped as soon as the actor sang the first line of the chorus. Something was wrong: too high. Jefferies, humming the melody at various pitches, walked across the stage in order to establish a suitable, and for that matter mutual, key with the accompanist.

‘Stop pissing about,’ laughed Tony.

‘I’m not,’ retorted Lionel, without a trace of a smile.

Thinking that his friend might be suffering from nerves, Newley offered to retreat to the back of the stalls. Jefferies trudged back to the centre of the stage and with a sudden and unexpected rush of confidence, began to hammer out a medley of East End music hall songs. ‘My Old Man’ followed ‘Roll Out The Barrel’ as Jefferies stamped his foot and filled the theatre.

Newley was ecstatic and shrieked from the back of the auditorium: ‘That’s it! That’s it! You’ve got a voice and you’ve got the part!’

‘Well, I don’t fucking want it!’ Jefferies shouted and promptly walked out.

Once again Newley needed a choreographer and it was David Merrick who suggested Gillian Lynne. A Royal Ballet School-trained dancer and still a performer in her own right, she had just returned from the Edinburgh Festival where her jazz-classical dance show, *Collages*, set to original music by Dudley Moore, had received standing ovations and a good deal of critical acclaim.

Still, *Greasepaint* was to be her first musical. Tony had known Gillian since 1956 when they first met on the set of *The Last Man To Hang*. She played his lover and the two spent four days 'making love' in the back of a Triumph. They had discussed at some length how they were not going to allow their love scene to become antiseptically English like so many others. As Gillian recalled, 'We got so deeply into it that the director had to tell us to cool it down a bit. We ended up having a short affair for about six weeks. It made our friendship very affectionate.' She and Tony had kept in touch since their fling but now found themselves like-minded colleagues, each complementing the other's work. After a few weeks of rehearsal in London, Newley was so pleased with this new relationship that he exclaimed, 'It's marvellous working with her; she's so intuitive, it's like working with yourself.'

Lynne considered that they were 'a pair of instinctives' and remembered with absolute pride the times when Newley liked what she was doing. She thought him a marvellous director because of his instinct but found him hell to direct because 'he was so intelligent and thought he knew it all'. Tony wouldn't let himself be directed by anyone else. Lynne and Newley started to 'open out' the songs together: 'That's where I learnt, very much, how to shape a song, and to do it with the man who had written it was pretty wonderful. Tony was the only person I have ever known who always injected the gesture before singing the sentence. By the time he sang it his body was already in it, a clever technique and I'm not even sure he knew he was doing it.'

The Roar of the Greasepaint - The Smell of the Crowd, like *Stop the World* before it, opened in Nottingham but it was clear from the start that all was not well. Delfont opined that it was the book that needed work and made some suggestions for changes. Newley seemed most concerned about Leslie Hurry's abstract design of hillocks behind gauze, while Bricusse was disappointed with Norman Wisdom's Cocky. Wisdom was a very different sort of performer from Newley and to the writer's mind lacked the dramatic attack of his partner. He didn't possess Tony's sense of humour either: 'Basically Norman was not a funny man. He did physical, knock-down, fall-about comedy and had none of Tony's superior abilities.' Bricusse was also unimpressed by Wisdom's singing and commented that his rendition of 'Who Can I Turn To?' was 'a sort of pathetic whining little version of the song'. On the other hand, Gillian Lynne thought that 'Wisdom wasn't as thrilling as Tony singing it, but he was pretty damn good.'

As the six-week tour moved on to Liverpool, the show failed to win the critics over or to attract a following. Indeed at some performances, members of the audience walked out, leading Brickman and Newberg to joke that what they thought was applause was in fact the tip-up seats in the theatre slapping against the backs as people left. By the time they reached Manchester there was little doubt amongst the company that a transfer to the West End was

looking highly unlikely. Bricusse and Newley had failed to implement Delfont's suggestions and the set, stripped of Hurry's scenery, now consisted of a bare wall, a ladder and some rope. In Newley's words: 'The show was a bit of a bummer.'

Newley felt for Wisdom's predicament and later concluded that although the part had been right for the actor, the show had been badly mounted and blamed himself for his own bad attack of ego. His production, he admitted, was so mundane it bored even him. Wisdom, Newley thought, had been brave to attempt something like this and he deserved to have it succeed but it just hadn't worked.

David Merrick came to see the show in Manchester and surprised Delfont, Newley and Bricusse with his post-show remarks. In a staccato bark, he told them to, 'Close the show. Don't go to London. Get rid of Wisdom. Newley, play the role. We open in New York next spring. It'll be a hit.' Delfont, however, gave Newley and Bricusse, whom he considered to be in the same league as Lerner and Loewe, one last hope: if the show garnered three good reviews during its stay in Manchester, he would risk the West End. *Greasepaint* closed a week later.

Bricusse and Newley, devastated by the reviews, fled to Portofino to drown their sorrows in Mediterranean sun and wine. Joan was on location out there with Tara, playing opposite Vittorio Gassman in the Italian film, *La Congiuntura*. This was Collins's first film for some time and although she was loath to be parted from Tony, he had encouraged her to accept the job. Joan had lost the baby she was expecting early on in the pregnancy and although Tony had been 'very concerned and loving', filling her room with flowers and making her cups of tea, a diversion such as this was what they both felt she needed.

The two writers carried out a post mortem on *Greasepaint*'s premature demise. Newley wondered whether the trouble with success was that 'it sits and watches you write your second show. Instead of just getting on with it you start analysing what you are doing. Too often that kills spontaneity.' Their acceptance both that there was work to be done on the book and that mistakes had been made in the production was countered by their unwavering belief in the show's worth, and especially in the quality of the score. It was this quiet confidence in the piece that made Tony reconsider his post-*Stop the World* decision not to perform again. If Merrick really believed in the show, but would only back the project if Newley played the role of Cocky, then a return to Broadway seemed very much on the cards. Besides, 'it's easier to do it myself,' thought Newley.

After only a few weeks in England Tony and Joan received some news that made a return to America seem much more attractive, if not imperative.

STOP THE WORLD

Newley's accountants advised him that he stood to lose the majority of his earnings to the Inland Revenue if he continued to live permanently in England. Even Newley, with his lack of financial acumen, realised that this was a wholly undesirable state of affairs. However, if he decided to resume his non-resident status, then owning any property in the UK would only complicate his tax position. The move back to the States seemed the lesser of two evils. Friars Mead, at last almost ready for the Newleys to move in, was sold, to their deep disappointment.

So, nine months after their departure the Newleys were back in New York.

CHAPTER EIGHT

FEELIN' GOOD

THE NEWLEYS MOVED into a furnished apartment on 72nd Street as a stopgap before the tour of *Greasepaint* began. Joan was pregnant once again and as they believed they were to be in America for the foreseeable future, Tony had invited Grace and Ron to move to the States with them. Once there, Tony gave his mother a weekly allowance and paid Ron to fetch and carry for him and Joan. If Newberg and Brickman had desired any confirmation that the American public appreciated their work, then it appeared days after their arrival in the form of a telephone call from Noël Rogers of United Artists Music. The 'Goldfinger' single had been at the top of the charts for several weeks and there were two framed gold records awaiting collection at the 7th Avenue offices. Newley and Bricusse didn't even know that it had been released.

Apart from his demand that Newley play the part of Cocky, Merrick had also asked for a number of changes to be made to *The Roar of the Greasepaint*, and a new production team was duly brought together in New York. Leslie Hurry was replaced with the resourceful and redoubtable Sean Kenny, Freddy Wittop came on board as costume designer and the new orchestral arrangements by Philip J Lang were directed by Herbert Grossman. Only Gillian Lynne survived the transatlantic transfer. She and Newley began auditioning the hundreds of girls who queued up to be seen. This chore was made more bearable for Newley by the fact that so many of these teenagers turned up in gym slips – 'which he loved,' recalled Lynne. She had to urge him continually to get a move on as he would dally with girls that were clearly not suitable for the show but whom he rather liked. He would not, however, cast anybody on looks alone; talent was all. Sally Smith was cast as The Kid, while Cyril Ritchard as Sir was presented as a *fait accompli* by Merrick: an exquisite piece of casting that could not have been bettered, even by Newley.

Kenny's design was radically different from Hurry's English production. Built around a number of raised and tilted discs, the action took place on a massive circular game board. It was clear to the producers that it would be a difficult set to work on. So in an unprecedented move, Merrick's assistant producer, Samuel 'Biff' Liff gave the go-ahead for the set to be built and erected in a scenic studio on 2nd Avenue in time for the beginning of rehearsals. 'That was out of the ordinary. You couldn't do that show without doing that,'

STOP THE WORLD

Liff said. 'There was no way of rehearsing it on a flat floor and then trying to put it on. You would have spent all the time reblocking it.'

As in *Stop the World*, the lights and mechanics of the stage were visible to the audience and the actors were dressed in one outfit throughout the show. This time, though, the clowns had been replaced with tramps. Merrick had also wanted some changes made to the book but they didn't happen. One member of the team who was less than happy with the changes that *had* been made was Gillian Lynne:

Merrick said he would take the show as long as they rewrote the book. They didn't rewrite the book; they changed one scene and they got rid of Leslie Hurry who had done a wonderful job and replaced him with Sean Kenny who fucked it up as far I was concerned because he came up with nineteen discs for song after song. The first set had depth which it needed; it was much more abstract and the show could come out at you. In a way they killed a bit of the show by doing that.

But the one component of the show about which no one had any doubts was the score. Bricusse and Newley had consciously set out to make each number in the show a song in its own right, a song that could be performed as easily without the production as it could within, and it was not long before their artful approach began to bear fruit. Merrick released the cast album prior to the tour and cover after cover version appeared on the record stands. Twelve of the sixteen songs, including 'Feeling Good', 'A Wonderful Day Like Today', 'Look At That Face' and 'The Joker' performed by the likes of Shirley Bassey, Perry Como, Bobby Darin,* Sammy Davis Jr, Sarah Vaughan and Matt Monro became familiar to radio listeners across America, while 'Who Can I Turn To?' (recorded the previous year) gave Tony Bennett his biggest hit after 'I Left My Heart in San Francisco'. One hundred and fifty different recordings of songs from the show had been made before *Greasepaint* had reached New York, twice as many as any other new musical on Broadway had had previously. The cast album topped the best seller charts and went on to sell over 100,000 copies. When the box office opened in New York, a new record of \$20,000 was set for first day ticket sales and business remained brisk until the show opened in May with a staggering \$750,000 advance.

The pre-Broadway tour was a long one. *Greasepaint* opened at the Dupont Theatre in Delaware on 4 February and visited Washington, Philadelphia, New Haven, Boston, Cleveland and Toronto before its Broadway premiere and Newley's return to the Shubert Theatre on 16 May. Joan and Tara

* Darin played Herod in Newley's home movie *A Jewish Star is Born* opposite Joan's Virgin Mary.

accompanied Tony throughout. Bricusse wrote to Newley in Delaware, perhaps a little fearful of a repeat of the English failure:

Dearest Newberg,

I said in Liverpool that my dearest wish would be to see you play *Greasepaint* just once.

If you think I've come 3,467 miles to see you play it just once...

You are beautiful

Thank you

Brickman

The days during the tour were filled with rehearsals although very few substantive changes were made. Only one new song was added and Merrick's demands with regard to the book were pretty well ignored. The burden of work fell upon Lynne's shoulders, for with Newley on stage, it was she who was, in essence, directing the show. After a few days, an understudy was brought in to play the part of Cocky, so that Tony could stand back and take a look at the production. Newley the director was once again at the forefront, and his need to take care of everyone and everything else left his own performance wanting, which at times drove Gillian to distraction: 'In the middle of a song I would see him checking the lights!'

Lynne was not afraid to challenge Tony. She had staged 'The Joker' - 'like Petrushka, an embittered, jealous clown.' The number was done 'internally', working against the nature of the song, but at the end Newley would suddenly open up and fling his arms out to the sides. Gillian stopped him on one occasion, her frustration only too apparent:

'Why have you let go?' she asked.

'Because I can't get the fucking note unless I clench my buttocks and do that,' Newley retorted.

'Well, at least open your eyes,' laughed Lynne.

It was 'The Joker' as well that caused Merrick to take a stand against Tony. While in Cleveland, Biff Liff received a call from the stage manager who had been told by Merrick to go down into the orchestra pit and pull out all the parts for The Joker:

'Did he tell you to tell Tony?' asked Liff.

'No.'

'So what are you going to do tonight when the song comes up and it's not there? Tony will have egg on his face. No, you can't do that. Don't do anything please.'

Liff hung up and walked over to Merrick's office. He knew that his employer never did anything gratuitously. So there must be a reason for this. Liff came straight to the point: 'David, you can't do that.'

'No. That's just the way it is.' Merrick hadn't even looked up.

'You can't do it. It's impossible. What is it that you want?' continued Liff.

'I hate that song. I hate it,' the producer spat out.

Recognising that Merrick was trying to provoke Newley into phoning him, Liff returned to his office and called the actor. He explained what Merrick had ordered the stage manager to do. Tony saw red: 'He can't do that!'

'Well that's the problem, so we may as well get it sorted out,' Liff replied, sounding almost bored.

'I won't allow it!' screamed Newley.

'Just a second.' Liff went into Merrick's office and put him on the line.

Merrick and Newley tore into each other for what seemed like an age, until finally the problem was fixed and the song remained in the show. Quite how the matter was resolved remains uncertain. Merrick claimed that Newley backed down when he rightfully pointed out that the music belonged to the producer and unless he performed it the way the producer desired, the song would be cut forthwith. If so, this stance would have been an extraordinary one for Merrick to have taken. He rarely interfered with a director's ideas and it would be highly unlikely that he had any alternative suggestions himself. Merrick knew that there was something wrong with the number but he didn't know what. Liff thought that Merrick's strength in saying he didn't want to do something 'had to do with things that he didn't believe were going to work. He would force his own opinion. He didn't know *what* to do, he wouldn't say, you gotta take this out or do this with "The Joker". Merrick needed attention but Tony was just as strong as David. Tony didn't want to do anything. It wasn't until Merrick forced the issue that Tony discussed. Merrick was very highhanded with him, he thought he knew better.'

Gillian Lynne and Bricusse remembered Merrick and Newley arguing for some time over whether the song should be cut and that it was Merrick himself who crept into the pit one matinee, to remove the parts. He then announced to Newley, 'Now you have to cut it!' To which Newley replied, 'Fine, but I won't be performing tonight.' Merrick returned the parts. Either way, a compromise of sorts was reached between the two protagonists and the song remained in the show.

During the company's visit to Boston, Newley received a letter of introduction from Rex Harrison for a Dr Gotlieb of Boston University. In 1960, Howard Gotlieb had been instated as Director of the University's newly established Twentieth Century Special Collections Department. His mandate was to collect the letters and papers of people of note or celebrity, including actors, writers and artists who were still alive. Gotlieb had absolute control and could approach anyone he felt was of interest. Harrison, who had already

been honoured by the department, suggested that Gotlieb acquaint himself with Newley's work and advised Tony to begin saving his personal affairs. Gotlieb was already aware of Anthony Newley and considered him a man of immense talent, and recognised that he was someone with 'staying qualities'.

Gotlieb attended a performance of *Greasepaint* and met Newley. Newley then visited the department and the two men began a lengthy correspondence during which Gotlieb invited the actor to be included in the Special Collections alongside such prominent personalities as Dirk Bogarde, Bette Davis and James Mason. Newley, although flattered, was reticent at first. It was only after a little persuasion from Gotlieb and the assurance that he could most certainly trust the director and the university that he accepted the invitation. Dr Gotlieb asked Newley to save everything and occasionally to send packages to the university. Newley did as he was asked and taking Gotlieb at his word, sent everything up to that date including his shoes, which Gotlieb confessed with amusement 'we did not necessarily want'. The following year, 1966, the department held an Anthony Newley Exhibition during the dedication period of the new library building.

Greasepaint set new box office records in Philadelphia, Washington, New Haven and Boston. The show was improving all the time and Cyril Ritchard delighted Bricusse and the producers, who thought him perfect for the show. Newley, perhaps resentful that Ritchard was put in his path, was less certain. Coming from the old school of American Revue, Ritchard was the kind of actor who would say, 'Just tell me what to do and I'll do it,' and Biff Liff thought that he put up with a lot from Tony who would have readily replaced the older actor. Bricusse, on the other hand, saw the enthusiasm with which the audiences greeted Ritchard. He was a polished comedian and more than adequate musically: 'He coped admirably with those songs. He wasn't a big singer but he created a characterisation for Sir that made the musical numbers work. He was an affable old queen and he was very good in the role. I liked Cyril a lot.' Newley quietly accepted that Ritchard was there to stay and the two stars became friends. Within the theatre at least.

As the New York opening drew close, Gillian Lynne returned to do some final polishing of the show but it was clear to her where the real work was needed. She had a novel's worth of notes for Tony that she had made during the tour but had never been able to find the time to discuss with him. A day before the show opened on Broadway, Tony took the choreographer to one side saying, 'Gillie, *we've* got to work, haven't we?' 'Yes, darling, we have,' Lynne replied.

She and Tony worked flat out without a break throughout the remainder of that day and for most of the next day as well, until Tony had such a

headache that Merrick stepped in and brought the rehearsal to an end. The producer took Newley by the arm and led him to his dressing room where he put the actor to bed. Having instructed Newley to rest, Merrick then positioned himself outside the room and stood guard to ensure that nobody disturbed his star. Gillie was astounded: 'Nobody expected that of Merrick.'

The Roar of the Greasepaint – The Smell of the Crowd opened to an assortment of reviews which, like those that appeared for *Stop the World* three years previously, seemed to express all possible responses. John McClain in the *Journal* thought Newley 'a superb performer' while Walter Kerr at his most vitriolic suggested in the *Herald Tribune* that Newley was not 'a performer at all'. Kerr continued, '*Roar of the Greasepaint* is third-rate commerce masquerading as art. Fake art is dangerous. Someone might swallow it and think they've been cured.' Whereas the *New York Post* considered *Greasepaint*, with its 'enchanted score and unusual freshness of imagination', to be 'a musical of interesting originality'. Howard Taubman damned the writers as 'pretentious and corny', wrapping up his comments by stating that 'the name of *Greasepaint's* game is Banality'. *The Daily News* however, declared that the show 'brings this Broadway season to a close with a rousing Hurrah'. Interestingly, though, it was Kerr's opening comments that perhaps revealed that he knew more about Newley than he realised: 'If he keeps at it, Anthony Newley is going to wind up producing a Tin-Pan Alley version of *Pilgrim's Progress* performed by the Little Lost Boys from *Peter Pan*. What am I saying? He's done it.'

Tony's own view, when asked about his predilection for writing about the problems of the 'Little Man', was clear: 'I don't hate anybody or anything. But I do expect to make statements about the problems of being a human being.'

Even so, *Greasepaint* continued to attract the crowds and won six Tony Award nominations. Newley was nominated twice for Best Composer and Lyricist, and Best Director of a Musical while Cyril Ritchard received a nomination for Musical Star. (Zero Mostel once again took Best Actor for his performance in that year's runaway success, *Fiddler on the Roof*.) Newley was feted around New York. He was a major draw on Broadway and appeared on many of the A-list TV shows. He sang alongside Perry Como and Andy Williams and there was now interest from the cabaret circuit – Nate Jacobson was talking about a deal for Newley to open Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas the following year.

Despite the uncharacteristic care that Merrick had shown for Newley on the opening night, by the middle of the run the producer and actor were no longer talking to each other. Merrick paid little attention to Newley although he continued to believe in his talent and enjoyed the success of both the show

and the actor. But by the end of the run, 'David and Tony had had it!' Liff recalled.

Merrick just didn't give a damn. He wanted it his way. Tony wanted to be in control. He thought he was the best and was determined he knew everything. He was very outspoken and he probably thought he had the right to do as he wanted. I was always comfortable with Tony and as the go-between, between him and Merrick, I knew that the way to get the best out of Tony was to give him what he wanted.

Bricusse played the game differently. He genuinely liked Merrick, although he acknowledged that the man could be a villain and was renowned for pulling some fabulous strokes. But as far as Bricusse was concerned Merrick did them proud. 'We were very lucky to have him,' Bricusse said, 'because he was the shrewdest showman, being a lawyer by trade. The best producer I ever worked with, three shows with him, and they all came out ahead.'

Tony and Joan's son, Alexander (Sacha) Anthony Newley, was born on 8 September 1965. The family had moved into the apartment belonging to their neighbours, Paul and Joanne Newman, having spent the summer months in a rented house on Long Island. Now that their family was complete, Tony revelled in being a father. Even so, he was finding it very difficult to remain a faithful husband. Some weeks earlier at the theatre, Joan had walked in on him embracing one of the girls from the show. She chose to ignore what was evidently an indication of where Tony's interests lay; he made sure that in future he was a little more discreet.

Towards the end of the run, Newley was contacted by Arthur P Jacobs, who, along with his associate, Mort Abrahams, was in the process of producing a major screen musical for Twentieth Century Fox, based on the *Doctor Dolittle* stories of Hugh Lofting. Leslie Bricusse had not only written both music and lyrics (for which he would receive an Academy Award) but was also responsible for the screenplay. Bricusse would have been happy to collaborate with Newley on the project but the latter's success on stage had once again kept the two apart. APJac was so besotted with Tony's talent that he was insistent on casting him in the film as Dolittle's Irish companion, Matthew Mugg. 'Even though,' mused Bricusse, 'he was the most unlikely Irishman.' Still, Bricusse knew that Tony was perfect for the part in every other way and as Ian Fraser was also on board, Bricusse was thrilled that the threesome would have another chance to work together. With Rex Harrison already cast as the Doctor and Newley longing to get back into movies, this was a particularly exciting opportunity and prompted Tony and Joan's decision to move to Los Angeles once the show had closed. As winter set in, the cast received their notice and, after a very respectable 232 performances, *The Roar of the Greasepaint* closed on 4 December 1965, two weeks later than *Pickwick's* demise after a disappointing

six-week run. Newley left New York, having re-established himself as a leading light on Broadway, with his sights firmly fixed on conquering Hollywood.

Hollywood at that time was still a parish unto itself, a village even. A closed community which worked, partied and slept together. Within days of their arrival, the Newleys were the talk of the town and were speedily welcomed into elite circles. Here was Tony, a fresh new talent, married to Joan Collins and English to boot, a polymath who had knocked them dead in New York. He was a novelty that everyone wanted to visit. And visit they did.

The Newleys, spurred on by Joan's passion for socialising, could be seen at Ray Stark's house parties or playing tennis at Jack Warner's. Peter Lawford, Mia Farrow, Jack Haley Jr and Bobby Darin became close friends, along with a host of ex-pats such as David Hemmings, Roger Moore and Sean Connery, who were enjoying their own success in LA. Another pal was Samantha Eggar who had been cast as the love interest in *Dolittle* following her Oscar-nominated performance in *The Collector* with Newley's old love rival, Terence Stamp. This was intoxicating stuff and Newley lapped it up.

With several months to go before filming began on *Doctor Dolittle*, Newley took advantage of the many TV offers that were coming his way, one of which was the outstanding *The Song and Dance Man* directed and produced by Herb Ross for the *Bell Telephone Hour*. The show, a two-hander, was a feast of dance, music and narration which made considerable demands on the performers, and Ross remembered Newley being riddled with insecurity by the notion of working with his co-star, Donald O'Connor. As Newley's confidence grew during the brief rehearsal period, he began to enjoy the project and ultimately delivered what was undeniably one of his greatest performances.

But the party that was Hollywood soon began to pall. As Tony's interest in socialising waned, Joan's waxed. Her thirst for dinner parties and late-night expeditions to The Daisy (a members-only discotheque that became the Who's Who of Hollywood's private living room) was unquenchable. Newley started to opt out and Joan relied increasingly on her network of gay and married friends whom she could call on at a moment's notice to stand in for her husband when he stood her up. Tony's decisions to flake on invitations were often last minute. Joan would find him in his study, blanketed and ear-muffled, hard at work on the *Dolittle* script or jotting down ideas for scripts of his own. He seemed to be using his work to escape both Hollywood and her.

The gin rummy poker parties held at their Bel Air rented home could not be avoided. Then Tony would sit up into the early hours joshing with Hemmings, Sammy, Herb Alpert, Jerry Moss and Jack Haley Jr. Newley was undoubtedly great company; he was charming and funny; women found him adorable, and his genuine ability to make anyone feel at ease, as if they were

the only person he wanted to be with, was a singular gift that brought him a great deal of affection and loyalty. That gentleness he had displayed as a child had never left him and he was a good listener too. To some he was the life and soul of any gathering, he was his children's God; but to Joan he was a less than faithful husband, an occasional lover, an infrequent friend and somebody whom she began to realise was as different from herself as seemed possible. Like the Bricusses, Joan wanted to party, sit on a beach, go for a Sunday drive, play with the kids, watch a movie, dance all night, read a book. Tony wanted to stay at home, to work, to shut out the world and to be left alone. In one continuous and joyous dance, Joan embraced life. Tony appeared to want to sit the whole celebration out.

Tony's departure to begin shooting on *Doctor Dolittle* did little to reassure Joan of his interest in her or their family: Fox had provided a private plane to fly Samantha, Tony and Rex across to England where they were to begin shooting on location in the Dorset village of Castle Combe. Harrison's wife, the troubled and troublesome Rachel Roberts, had somehow managed to secure a seat on the flight, so Joan thought it reasonable enough for Tony to ask if his family could accompany him as she was not relishing the prospect of the journey alone with Sacha and Tara. Tony prevaricated: 'I don't know. You'll just have to sort it out.' Joan persisted, 'Can't you speak to APJac about it and say you've got a wife and two children? And if Rex is taking Rachel...' Tony dismissed the idea at once: 'Oh, you're always making such a fuss, flower. It's just as easy for you to get on a plane.'

Nothing more was said and Joan was left not only to get on the plane but to book and plan the whole trip as well as the move out of the Bel Air house. Putting aside their differences (and her own tit-for-tat extramarital excursions), Joan still loved Tony deeply and believed that he loved her. She was determined that their marriage could be a success if only he would let her in and show that he cared. She wrote to him in England, a long and desperate letter trying to explain why he made her so angry and how frustrated she was with his apparent indifference to her. She assured him that she understood his needs but that she had needs too. It was a letter from any young wife to the man she loved, resolutely committing herself to their relationship but asking for the attention that she both wanted and deserved.

A clue to Newley's feelings came in the form of an interview, the day after he had arrived in London:

My ambition now is to beat the system, climb out of the rat race, and play it my way with my rules and on my terms. I know what I'm worth, what I can do. Last week I went on the Andy Williams Show and pulverised them, *pulverised* them. The real ambition now is, like can I find success as a father, a husband? I mean that is the basis of

what I have to live with for the rest of my life. I think anything else, any other success, must follow that. I only wish I wasn't cursed with the one problem that all actors have – continually watching themselves come into a room. I'm still that self-centred and the art of giving a piece of yourself is still tough for me. But only tough. Once it was impossible.

Joan was not so sure that anything had changed.

Twentieth Century Fox had such confidence in both the product and Arthur P Jacobs that they assigned *Doctor Dolittle* the largest starting budget in the history of the studio. Before a player had been cast, the demonstration record, arranged and conducted by Ian Fraser with a forty-five-piece orchestra, had cost the company \$100,000, and for seven months prior to production several hundred of the two thousand animals used in the movie were given extensive training in California and England. The year-long shoot was to start in California, move to England for three months, followed by several months in St Lucia, and be wrapped up on the studio lot back in California. Fox could not have prepared themselves for the final and irretrievable reckoning: costly from the outset, *Doctor Dolittle* went fifty per cent over budget, costing more than \$18 million to create, making it the most expensive musical feature ever filmed.

The costs had started to spiral upwards from the very start. Bricusse's original idea for the screenplay would have cut the budget dramatically. He had never wanted to write the second half when the Doctor and his friends go off on their voyage, but the studio wanted a big spectacle. Harrison's own dithering, over whether he did or did not want to be involved in the film, caused Christopher Plummer to be offered the role which he duly accepted over lunch with the producers. Harrison's call the next day to say that he was 'very, very sorry', that he 'really did want to do it', and that he wouldn't 'be silly again' left the studio holding the most excessive lunch tab in the history of dining out: Plummer was paid off in full at a cost of \$400,000. Harrison also refused to mouth the lyrics to the pre-recorded orchestral playback, insisting instead on being recorded live during each take to a piano accompaniment. The orchestral backing for his songs had to be added later, incurring even greater expense. Bad weather in England forced the producer Dick Zanuck to recall the entire unit, animals and all, to Los Angeles, since four weeks after filming began director Richard Fleischer (of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* fame) had failed to complete two shots. The year's feed bill for the giraffe alone was \$70,000.

All was not sweet amongst the actors either. Harrison had vetoed Sammy Davis's involvement, saying that he didn't want to work with 'an entertainer'. He then suggested Sidney Poitier, who eventually accepted the role of Bumpo

Kahbooboo. Poitier was released after Bricusse decided to scrap the character and rewrite the second half of the screenplay, replacing Bumpo with William Shakespeare 10th (eventually played by Geoffrey Holder). Harrison also proved a difficult student when it came to the songs. Ian Fraser was vocal supervisor on the movie – cannon fodder for Harrison, who continually criticised Bricusse's lyrics. Fraser went to Portofino, where Harrison had a villa, to go through the music with the actor and once there, sat at the concert grand that Alan Jay Lerner had given the actor after *My Fair Lady* while Harrison, keen to get a suntan so he didn't have to wear makeup, lay outside sunning himself. On one occasion when Fraser stopped him to correct a mistake, Harrison hissed back at him, 'It's not Bricusse's fucking lyrics that matter, it's my performance.'

'But Rex, it would be better if you got the words right,' Fraser suggested, refusing to be riled.

Newley, on the other hand, couldn't have been more co-operative and never asked to change anything: 'He did what he was given,' recalled Bricusse. He also accepted help from his friend and collaborator in 'finding' his Irish accent – a quest that continued throughout the shoot.

In LA, Harrison stunned Fleischer with his sudden and inexplicable reaction to the news that Newley was to play Matthew Mugg. During his outburst he described Newley and Bricusse as 'sewer rats' who were ganging up and taking over. He went on to say that Newley had crawled out of the sewer, had joined his chum Bricusse whom he was helping to write the songs, which was why they were so rotten.

As APJac had cleared Newley's casting with Rex in the first place, this outburst seemed all the more bizarre. Once on the set Harrison was wholly professional, but his loathing for Newley persisted and it was not long before his vituperative remarks to other people about Tony began to filter back to the actor himself. Tony was 'a cockney Jew', an 'Eastender', a 'Jewish comic'. Like a school bully, Harrison attacked, aiming at a man's roots – and with Newley it hit the target. The man was a snob and a mean-spirited one at that. Newley didn't deserve it. Fraser, being an English public schoolboy, was safe. Richard Fleischer however, like Newley, was not.

Seated for dinner one balmy St Lucian evening, overlooking the bay where the Harrisons' yacht was anchored several hundred yards out, Fraser and Fleischer suddenly heard loud screaming coming from the boat followed by some grunting as Rex rowed to land, drunk as a lord. He staggered to the table and plumped himself down. 'Fucking woman,' he muttered.

After some moments of embarrassed silence, Fleischer kick-started the conversation. 'I've got this wonderful idea for this shot tomorrow, Rex, similar to something I did in *Fantastic Voyage*.'

'Oh, that was an awful film,' Rex cut in.

Fleischer was shocked: 'What do you mean?'

Harrison refused to explain his comment but elaborated on just how bad the film was while his director became increasingly irate. After half an hour an extremely distressed Fleischer 'leapt to his full five-foot-four', as Fraser recalled, and sobbed, 'How can you say these things about my film? What didn't you like about it?'

Rex sat back, triumphant: 'Oh, I never saw the fucking film... I was just told.'

The tension on set was palpable and it was patently obvious that Harrison had little or no respect for his co-star. Newley refused to acknowledge the rift between them and disclosed none of his own feelings to any of the cast or crew. He had been excited at the chance to work with Rex and was deeply hurt at being rejected – the discriminate nature of Harrison's invective being all the more shocking. And that is how it remained throughout.

'Tyrannosaurus Rex' was Bricusse's description, 'a monster' Newley's. 'Rex was a pain in the ass,' he would say later, 'a true pain in the ass, and probably the finest light comedian England has ever produced apart from Coward. I can do forty-five minutes of venom on Rex without drawing breath.' Newley also took some private comfort from the knowledge that every animal that came into contact with Harrison bit him.

Perhaps it was Harrison's miserable marriage to Roberts that brought him on to the set, as Samantha Eggar commented, 'with a huge burden which he certainly deserved'; perhaps he felt threatened by Newley's indisputable talent. A talent that he himself had suggested, only a year earlier, should be honoured and categorised for posterity at Boston University.

What surely did not help was the intimacy Harrison noted between Newley and Eggar. She had never met or worked with someone like Tony. To her he was an open soul. 'You could cry, laugh, scream, expose your innermost. Anything that came up, I would open up to him. That was the quality he brought out in me,' Eggar remembered fondly.

His aura brought out silently what was in you and what you may have never dared, or thought, to try with anybody else. This was the man's beauty. Tony was never ever a threat and always made you feel and believe that you were wonderful. He was physically very demonstrative. In those days we weren't even hugged by our parents and here he was, hugging you, and it went from the front of you through to the back of you. You were a better person for it and then you went and hugged another person, because you knew how good it felt. I felt so protected.

The two were inseparable and had, with the choreographer Herb Ross, his assistant Nora Kaye and Pat Newcombe, formed their own clique before filming had begun. The group bonded tremendously and they spent hours together in their digs watching movies projected onto a bed sheet screen. They ate together despite having to endure Tony's new and unpleasant habit of placing owl pellet remnants of masticated steak around his plate. 'Maybe the clique happened because we were the same ages and had the same sensibilities and tremendous respect for each other,' Eggar said. 'Tony was the star in our group and we knew he would get us through. It wasn't against anybody.' Nevertheless they became increasingly distant from Harrison.

Fleischer too was distant. He was not a director the actors would approach for help as they generally considered him not 'up to the job'. He certainly had little experience with musicals and at times he seemed not to know what he wanted. With the full weight of Fox on his shoulders and the mammoth task of completing the movie there was little time for the director to fraternise with his players. Harrison drove everyone to distraction with his intolerance of anything and anyone that might detract from his performance. Newley and Eggar irritated Harrison and Fleischer with their antics around the set, while Fleischer's lack of inspiration affected everyone. This uncomfortable tripartite antipathy between the players pervaded the entire shoot. Eggar remembered, 'It was always them and us and that is how we went through the film. Like schoolchildren. We were the young ones and they were the prefects, and we didn't like them and they didn't like us.'

Somehow Tony found the strength to overcome the difficulties of working with Rex. His performance as Matthew Mugg was charismatic and convincing. His scenes with Harrison display none of the enmity that existed between them. His scenes with Eggar make it difficult to believe that she was, supposedly, the love interest for Dolittle, as her Emma Fairfax and his Mugg made a devastatingly attractive couple on screen. And there was clearly chemistry at work between them:

Tony was so truthful but at the same time he was always the stage performer and always overplayed rather than underplayed. He made me pay attention, and possibly, change myself as an actor. I never changed anything with Rex. With him I decided how I was going to play Emma, and we would meet on set and do it. But every scene with Tony could change, all the time, just through looking into his eyes. So I never thought, 'I don't understand.' I have never experienced that with any actor since. I literally couldn't wait to work with him and that was maintained throughout the year.

STOP THE WORLD

Tony finished the movie with few regrets. He had adored working with Herb Ross and Samantha and for all his disappointment over his relationship with Rex, *Dolittle* had proved an ideal vehicle for his talents. He was now a bankable film property whom Warner Bros immediately snapped up to play opposite Sandy Dennis in the bittersweet comedy romance, *Sweet November*. Bricusse was riding high too. The movie won two Academy Awards, including Best Song for 'Talk To The Animals',* and he had been offered two more movies as writer and composer. For Twentieth Century Fox, however, *Doctor Dolittle* was a financial and critical disaster which seriously undermined the solvency of the studio.

Fittingly it was Joan who got a dig at Harrison to his face. Chatting to him at a studio party she proposed that, looking as good as they did together, it would be wonderful if Emma/Eggar and Matthew/Newley had an affair.

Rex looked aghast: 'Are you saying that Emma would prefer Matthew to me?'

'Well, they are so much closer in age,' Joan simpered innocently.

* Newley would later say, 'I doubt whether Rex could talk to the animals but I'm certain he was married to one.'

CHAPTER NINE

NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW!

RETURNING TO LOS ANGELES, the family moved into an elegant white-painted mansion set in two acres on Summit Drive, a house of their very own. Things seemed to have improved between Joan and Tony. He was once again attentive and more willing to involve himself in their social life. They now had a housekeeper and gardener whom they had brought back from England (much to the annoyance of Lila Burkeman, the couple's previous employer, and friend of the Newleys) and the presence of Gracie gave both Tony and Joan plenty of free childcare. Newley doted on Tara and Sacha. He lavished countless toys and gifts on them and spent hours in the pool teaching them to swim or 'directing' them in fully scripted and costumed home movies. Sammy and Altovise Davis, Paul and Joanne Newman, Natalie Wood, R J Wagner, Barbra Streisand and Elliot Gould, Peter and Linda Bren were all neighbours and regular visitors, as were the Newleys' constant friends, Leslie and Evie, and the newly weds, Ian and Judee Fraser.

The Newleys had another interest. Along with Sammy Davis Jr, Ronnie Buck, Peter Bren, Dick Donner, Pierre Salinger, Peter Lawford and Paul Newman, they had opened their own private nightclub called The Factory. The group had first toyed with the idea while sitting around Lawford's beach house grouching about The Daisy and how its owners, Jack and Sally Hanson, seemed to give as little service as possible in order to make more money. Everybody seemed to have an idea or two on how the club could be improved if only the Hansons would do this or that. Newman halted the moan-in and suggested that they stop complaining and open a club themselves. They all agreed and, pointing to Peter Bren, who was involved in the real estate business, said, 'Find a place.'

Some weeks later, Bren was driving through the industrial section east of Beverly Hills, when he saw a For Rent sign outside an old industrial building that had been a bomb factory during World War Two. Jumping out of the car, he saw at once the enormous freight elevator that went up one storey. Its floor was made up of two by four upended oak planks that could clearly carry a great deal of weight. As the lift came to a stop on the floor above, Bren walked into a room the size of an aeroplane hangar boasting a floor identical to the one in the lift, which in this space looked like parquet flooring: a perfect dance floor. The whole group visited the site and agreed that this was the place.

The point of the club was to 'make it the best private club in the world with the best membership in existence', as Bren remembered. This was a place for film stars, musicians, agents, artists and producers. No dentists, furriers, journalists or gynaecologists. The group invited Jerry Orbach of Orbach Stores to join the Board and pooled their rolodexes to create an invitation list from the cream of LA society. The membership fee was set at \$350. They could have set it at \$3,500, such was the interest.

Newley played a big part in the interior design, insisting on a 'directors' room' – a labyrinthine area suitable for more intimate exchanges between selected invitees. Newman had his burger bar and billiard room. With a \$40,000 loan, none of the directors put a dollar of their own money up front and none of them took a dollar out. Ronnie Buck was the only director to be given a salary, as it was he who was to run the club. The directors had free passes to give out but only to beautiful girls, on the proviso that they should come alone, no boyfriends or guys. 'It was glamour, beauty, nothing sexual,' Bren maintained. 'If you didn't have beautiful girls in a club, no one would come. There were no hookers or anything like that. Lawford or one of us would see beautiful girls out on the beach and give them a pass. Dance was really the rage then, ahead of heavy narcotics.'

The response was incredible. Every name actor in the business clamoured to join. Half of Hollywood attended the opening and within weeks the membership included Sinatra, Milton Berle, Streisand, Ronald Reagan, The Beatles, Liza Minelli, The Rolling Stones, Bobby Kennedy and the Fondas, to name but a few. They felt safe because, as Bren remarked, 'it was their place' and with the freight elevator and 260lbs of besuited doorman to get past, it was virtually impossible for strangers to get in. Even Aristotle Onassis was left outside waiting in his car while a director was found to invite him up. The Factory was an instant success and money began to flood in over the transom. As the club was run strictly on a non-profit basis, the directors had to think of ways to get rid of the vast sums that were beginning to accrue. Sammy suggested hiring his band and staging his act in the club one Sunday evening (the uncensored version, naturally) to which all members would be invited at no extra charge. Dinner was also gratis. This one-off became a monthly occurrence with various artistes, amongst them Sinatra and Joni Mitchell, taking to the stage.

There had always been an agreement between the directors that should interest in the club begin to decline, then they would close. After twelve short months The Factory had lost its initial shine and Buck, who valued his position as manager of the club (and the bonuses that went with it), decided to open up the membership to other professionals. Tony was distinctly turned off by this idea. He had distanced himself from the club over the intervening months as

his work became, once again, all-consuming. He only remained a director due to Joan's interest in the club – at least he knew where to find her. But Joan agreed with Tony that to open The Factory up would kill it. However, Buck persisted and the Newleys resigned from the Board. Their view was endorsed by Bren and within months of their departure he had led a successful proposition, backed by Newman, to close the club. The fittings and fixtures were sold off, the directors' miniature factory wrench necklaces were put away and every member received a cheque which amounted to more than their original subscription. It had been one hell of a party and the fact that it had come and gone so quickly made the legend of The Factory so much the greater.

Tony had rented an apartment on Doheney Drive which he used as his office and it was there that Herman Raucher, the author of *Sweet November*, first met Newley. Tony had invited him there as he wanted to hear the writer read the lines of his screenplay before filming began. The plot, based on a true story, revolved around the young, beautiful, slightly kooky but terminally ill Sandy Reeve, who takes in a different lover for each remaining month of her life. She meets Charlie Blake, a manufacturer of boxes, and invites him to be with her throughout November, at the end of which he must leave. He agrees, takes an extended leave from his firm and moves in to her New York apartment. Charlie falls in love with Sandy and although she returns his love, she insists on his keeping to their original agreement.

Raucher had originally created the part of Charlie Blake for an American actor but had rewritten it when he discovered Newley was to play the role. Although Newberg and Brickman wrote the title song, which Tony sang over the credits, the role of Charlie called for a straight actor. This was Tony's chance to secure his place as a screen actor, and reading this script he felt confident that it would open new horizons for him. Raucher and Newley were fast friends within days. Their humour was similar and as Raucher recalled, 'we just connected'. Which was more than Tony and his co-star, Sandy Dennis, managed to do on set. For the sake of the film, Newley was desperate to 'fall in love' with Sandy, but she was having nothing to do with that. He felt threatened by her and was convinced that 'like the average American female', she was out to collect men's testicles. He found her aggressive and coarse and hated her habit of belching 'loudly and proudly'. He thought her graceless and her demeanour that of 'a humourless suet pudding'. His way of dealing with their differences was, typically, to disappear into his shell. From there he would peer at the world, emotionless and removed, giving every impression that he was wholly uninterested in what was going on around him while the discomfort he felt within seemed to contort every muscle and restrict his breathing.

To make matters worse, their methods of preparation were profoundly different. Whereas Newley came on to the set word-perfect and sure of how he wanted to play a scene, Dennis was an actress who approximated and developed her ideas as she went. Consequently, Tony's first take was often his best while Sandy only got up to speed some twenty attempts later. As Raucher recalled, 'So he was getting worse while she was getting better. The whole film is taken from take fifteen.' Dennis also had a habit of reading her lines hesitantly, stammering word after word and packing her speeches with extended pauses. Over two minutes of her 'ooing and er-ing' were pulled out of the soundtrack. Newley worked hard to restrain his performance and succeeded in playing the comedy without playing the fool, although Raucher noted that 'he did great double takes' and that at times 'his eyebrows left his head'.

The critics were unimpressed. Lukewarm reviews intimated that they had tired of Dennis' curious style and somehow Newley failed to make the grade. Was it his face? His manner? His tendency to overplay a scene (as Samantha Eggar had remarked)? He never knew. Raucher blamed himself and after seeing an early screening, he wrote to Newley: 'The writing fell in love with itself. The movie talks itself to death.' The producers thought they had a winner; Newley thought it would make him a star. They were all deeply disappointed.

During the filming of *Sweet November*, Newley asked Raucher to join him as co-writer on a musical screenplay he had been working on for some time, that Jay Kantor at Universal Pictures in London had given the green light on as well as a million dollar budget. Newley was to write the screenplay, compose the songs, play the title role, direct and produce the picture. Universal had given him *carte blanche* to do as he pleased and at thirty-six years old, Anthony Newley had decided to put his life so far onto the screen. Although, as Gurney Slade, Johnny Darling, Littlechap and Cocky, he had previously explored parts of his history and psyche, now he was to bring all the elements together. He commented at the time, 'I'm beginning to feel more and more, that the only things I really enjoy, are things that emanate directly from inside my small cockney head.'

Newley paid Raucher \$10,000 for him and his family to move to LA for a few months to work on the film. The writer also received a half-share in the movie itself. There was some conflict over the screenplay that Newley had already written but by his own admission he was not a screenwriter. 'The original idea was Newley's but it was all over the place, like an exploding bomb. It needed some organisation,' Raucher remembered. He set to work each morning, moulding the one-dimensional tokens of Tony's mind into fully rounded characters: 'There was an outline but there was nothing substantial. He gave me the dummy idea of a line and then I went away and wrote it.'

Raucher would reach the office some hours before Newley and work alone. He didn't mind; he knew how busy Tony was. The actor was at the top of his game, there were meetings to attend, parties to drop in on, children to care for and at this stage there was The Factory too. Raucher discovered just how busy and complicated Tony's life was when he started receiving phone calls at the office: 'There were messages from a "Mrs Gould", as though I wouldn't recognise her voice. Barbra and Newley had an affair. I don't think that Tony had one affair that was single, there were a lot of ladies. He would go into the garden and pluck a flower. From that point he was almost unconscionable.' But then there were moments when he would play the supportive husband, asking Herman to call Joan to tell her how great she was on a TV show that she had just appeared on. These parallel lines of Tony's life did not surprise Raucher: he thought Tony chameleon-like to the point that he had no true identity of his own. He was to his friends what they wanted him to be. There was no one single Anthony Newley: 'Tony was totally fragmented, like an exploding rocket he would go off in a million different directions; but then on occasion he would marshal it creatively. He would get on his Melodica and write a song. When he was writing then he was at his happiest.'

Joining the team as co-lyricist was the journalist and songwriter Herbert Kretzmer. The success of his and songwriter Dave Lee's 'Goodness Gracious Me', written for Peter Sellers and Sophia Loren, along with both their musical version of *The Admirable Crichton*, which starred Kenneth More and Millicent Martin, and their weekly compositions for *That Was The Week That Was*, had awoken Newley to Kretzmer's considerable talents, which he felt would complement both Raucher's and his own work. He had asked Brickman first, but the old friend had refused: 'By then I knew him so well I could see what he was doing. I didn't want to be part of it. I would have enjoyed writing the songs but I didn't like the implication of what the film was going to do.' The relationship between them had started to change imperceptibly ever since *Doctor Dolittle*. Bricusse was now seen as composer/lyricist/writer and was being offered a great deal of work in his own right.

Almost every song in the movie was conceived by Newley and he supplied Kretzmer with each title, the opening lines or the hook lyric for every number. Kretzmer recognised that he was being asked to write a musical that had little to do with him personally. He knew he had to 'get into Tony's head' and map out in detail what Tony had provided in a general design. He had to fill out the blanks, 'and that was why it was a very easy job to do,' Kretzmer recalled. 'It was like being given a crossword puzzle with the vital clues already half-filled in, so no matter where you went, there was a clue, a guide.' Newley's own lyrics were cleaned up by Kretzmer. Tony wasn't a polisher: to him the rough diamond was good. In an act of selflessness, Newley insisted that Kretzmer should get the full credit for lyrics. 'He should have shared it with me,' Herbert said. 'He was generous in his assigning me sole credit.'

The production's base was in London. Tony, Joan, Tara, Sacha, the nanny and Gracie and Ron once again left Los Angeles, letting Summit Drive to Elliott Gould and Barbra Streisand. They moved into 12 Park Street where they stayed until the ten-week shoot began on the island of Malta in March 1968. Newley took a suite of rooms at Victor Lowndes' Playboy Club on Park Lane, which served as offices. There he installed his new secretary, Judy Seal (another Gemini and whom Newley adored), at one end of the corridor and settled into his own bedroom/office at the other. An intercom allowed them to communicate. By chance, Ian Fraser was staying at the club while working on another Bricusse project for MGM. This serendipitous arrangement made him available to both writers: 'I would work on Leslie's score and then Tony would walk along and sing me the songs for the movie and I would put them down on paper,' Fraser remembered. 'I never felt pulled between the two, it always worked out.'

Newley went into overdrive. 'Life is so hectic,' he wrote to a friend, 'the last time I saw my children, they thought I was the man who had come to repair the television!!!'

Can Heironymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness? told the story of Heironymus Merkin, a Hollywood writer/singer/actor who, having just celebrated his fortieth birthday, is suddenly aware of how little time he has left. Surrounded by the paraphernalia of his life's work, the sum of which is soon to be preserved in a museum built in his name, he recounts the story of his life, for the educative benefit of his two small children. Set entirely on a beach, this film within a film was an explicit exposure of everything that was Anthony Newley. He declared, 'To me it was like a statement – I felt it was the sum total of my life to date.' Every facet of his life informed the original screenplay:

- *his illegitimacy*: 'Your daddy never had a daddy'
- *wartime evacuation and Gracie*: 'That's me with the big label around my neck and the gas mask, saying goodbye to Grandma'
- *George Cornille Pescud*: 'I was lucky to find myself billeted in the home of a friendly old Music Hall Entertainer, J Poindexter Limelight'
- *his early success as an actor*: 'While other boys his age were chasing about on the athletic fields, Heironymus Merkin was trapped in the bright glare of the spotlight'
- *Diana Dors*: 'A big lacquered blonde thing with a thousand velvet curves'
- *a male affair?*: 'An occasional exotic fruit'

- *his shotgun marriage to Ann Lynn*: 'She has a big belly, Daddy'
- *the death of Simon*: 'The child was born with a hole in his back the size of a fist. The doctor said he'd never be normal. The hospital said we could leave him there, which we did. As an act of pure compassion they let the li'l feller die'
- *Stop the World*: 'In my late twenties there was some of my best stuff happened, Daddy wrote a show with music...so original, so brilliantly written and directed, in spite of the lousy things the critics said, the people loved it'
- *his love of Ingmar Bergman*: 'His pictures never have an end. Half the time they don't have a beginning'
- *Boston University*: 'The Yetta Lipschitz Academy of Performing Arts'
- *astrology*: 'Typical Libra, you bruise so easily'
- *atheism*: 'We're alone. We always have been! We always will be! Alone!'
- *death*: 'Your father's life expectancy, according to his insurance policy, is 65.3. Take away 40 and I don't have much time'
- *Hollywood*: 'For a time, your father thought he would go out of his mind in this sugar-coated amusement park – in the incestuous rounds of parties where you park your intellect by the door and dive into a pool of small-talk. Your mummy is made of stronger stuff. She thrived on the incessant chatter of those Technicolored parakeets'
- *his children*: 'The idle passion of a moment could bring forth a living miracle'
- *Joan Collins*: 'One of those women who wanna make marriage work no matter what havoc you wreak on your husband'

It was both a chronological portrayal of his life and a guess at his future. Newley dug deep, turning himself inside out: everything was included, every triumph, every failure, every doubt, every certainty and, most surprisingly, every demon. Except one perhaps: there was no hint of Anneke and Polly Wills. Maybe he really believed that he was not the father – he'd said as much to Brickman, even suggesting (wholly unsubstantiated) that Sean Kenny was a more likely candidate for paternity. Perhaps this was one truth that Newley could not afford, literally, to divulge.

He cast Tara and Sacha as Merkin's own children, Thumbelina and Thaxted, while Joan played their mother and Merkin's second wife, Polyester Poontang. He assembled a cast of extraordinary and diverse talents which included George Jessel as The Presence (Death), Milton Berle as Good Time Eddie

Filth (the Devil), Judy Cornwell as Merkin's first wife, Filigree Fondle (Ann Lynn), Bruce Forsyth as Uncle Limelight (Pescud), Patricia Hayes as Grandma (Gracie), Ronald Rubin as Skinny Writer (Cocky) and Stubby Kaye as Fat Writer (Sir). Herman Raucher was under no illusion about the nature of the film from the start, indeed it was he who had convinced Tony to cast Joan: 'I told him to put her in it otherwise he would be crucified in the press,' Raucher recollected. 'I said, "You will de-fang the dragon and she becomes an accomplice in the whole drama."'

To Kretzmer it was crystal-clear about whom Newley was writing:

He was writing about himself – about a man who was: a, randy; b, hungry for success; and c, who sought success in the unhealthy social environs of California culture and everything that went with it. Everyone knew that he had been married before. His wife was being played by his wife. One didn't need to be an Hercule Poirot to work out this was a personal statement.

At the time however, Newley repeatedly denied such close connection with himself: '*Heironymus Merkin* is not my autobiography,' he asserted, 'although I must admit there's a good deal of my life in it. But to me that's no different from an artist or a writer putting something of himself into anything he creates. In my case it definitely does not connote directly to the way things happened to me or what came out of them.' It would be many years before he would reveal in his diary that in fact the whole was 'totally autobiographical'. Perhaps his refusal to acknowledge that the film was based on fact was an attempt to protect Joan and his family from some of the 'truths' he was trying to come to terms with. Perhaps he genuinely couldn't see that Heironymus Merkin was a mirror reflecting his own complex and tortured soul. When asked to sum up the theme of the movie, he was suspiciously coy: 'I prefer, like the great one-man band, Charles Chaplin, to say, "Let the film speak for itself."'

But Heironymus Merkin was a feast of so many things that it defied categorisation as being any one thing. It was everything from an erotic fantasy musical (a description Newley hated) to pie-in-the-face British Music Hall comedy. It ricocheted from MGM musical to Daliesque surrealism, from the grand statement to the banal. It was at once both sophisticated and elegant yet puerile and vulgar.

Apart from the 'players' in the Merkin story, there were also the producers:

RON

You know, I don't know why we're worried about an ending. Half the audience will be gone before we ever get there.

NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW!

PETER

When they hear about this stuff the other half won't even come in.

and the writers:

FAT WRITER

We had to leave out the stuff where you go to prison because we just couldn't get a song out of it, but don't worry baby – we're staying faithful to the facts.

Newley even included three 'critics'; perhaps to pre-empt the reaction he feared the film might attract and to acknowledge his own insecurities about his work.

PENELOPE

I don't mind his vulgarity. It's his pretension that irks me.

SHARPNOSE

The whole thing is self-glorification on a masturbatory level.

But then, even Newley was able at times to cut himself some slack:

BENTLEY

Oh, I dunno. I've always liked this chap's work. A lot of it is scatological and loosely put together – But it's fun and his *music* is nice.

Newley's persona was divided into four characters. Merkin himself was instantly recognisable as Anthony Newley the performer and man. Then there was The Mask, the faceless and mute body of Merkin who goes through the motions of making love to an assortment of girls, while Merkin looks on. The Narrator, a detached voice (Newley's) who presents the gilded and spotless public persona which Merkin himself pooh-poohs, 'Ah, shaddduuuuuup! You big sissy! You mint! You're always overdoing it.' And finally, the Director (also played by Newley), hidden in the gloom: a man who has little or no control of the proceedings and who in the final scene is revealed to be 'the actor we have come to know as Heironymus', un-costumed, and named Tony.

STOP THE WORLD

Tony wanted to explore his own theistic doubts in the movie and set a scene with Merkin atop a stony outcrop, dressed in a white kaftan, talking to God. With arms outstretched Merkin declares, 'I need no Gods, I believe no dreams. I'm all I need.' Tony was worried that a song about a man questioning the very existence of God would, Kretzmer recounted, 'strike horror and shock into the hearts of the nation on hearing such an heretical lament. Of course it did nothing of the kind.' The song did however attract the attention of the minister of New England's largest Baptist Church in Worcester, Massachusetts, one Reverend Gordon M Targerson who, having heard 'I'm All I Need' on the radio, delivered his Sunday discourse on the nihilistic content of the song. He sent a copy of the sermon to Newley who responded to the Reverend by commenting that it was a great pity he had taken the song out of context. Targerson replied that on the radio, out of context was where it was heard.

But one area of the screenplay illustrates the extent to which Newley was prepared to go in the attempt to purge or to explain himself and his actions: 'This is a film of today,' Tony revealed. 'Take the whole love business. I've got a couple of my own hang-ups in the picture. This is the age of the Lolita. The attraction of the very young girl for the much older man.'

HEIRONYMUS

What you are about to see now, Daddy finds very difficult to explain. Although I was still very attracted to women my own age, I found that – in my late twenties – I was increasingly drawn toward – young girls. By young girls, I mean – *young* girls.

And then:

Daddy was now in his early thirties and doing – doing very well. But – he was still searching for the perfect child-lover. Always looking and wanting but – never daring. One day I met The Child who was to become the crowning erotic passion of my life.

Tony was fascinated by the idea of his bringing young women alive sexually and sensually. Herbert Kretzmer found the idea, at least, unremarkable: 'It's a theme as old as fiction. The Sleeping Beauty... We are not talking about children or anything bizarre or reprehensible; we are talking about the fascination of the mature man with innocence un-awakened.' Tony's image of himself as teacher and guide was an integral part of his sexual fantasies.

NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW!

Merkin's relationship with Polyester is a recreation of Tony's relationship with Joan. Their first meeting in the theatre along with the nature of their wedding is replicated on screen. Kretzmer's lyrics for her song 'Chalk & Cheese' say it all:

POLYESTER

How did you get into my horoscope
You funny irascible loveable dope
Isn't it clear from the stars
That you haven't a hope with me?
Anyone else would have known in advance
Libra and Gemini haven't a chance
Anyone else would have said at a glance
It could never be.
Chalk and cheese
We're as different as
Chalk and cheese
Were there ever two
People more
Outta step before
More unlike if you please?
Souls apart
We are opposite
Poles apart
When I think about
Me and you
Saying 'how d'you do?'
Maybe it wasn't so smart.
Me I'm bright
Got a groovy scene
I like to be where it's at.
You're uptight
As a tambourine
What kind of music is that?

Merkin's pre-wedding conversation to Mercy may very well have mirrored one between Tony and the Baker twin back in the Shubert Theatre during *Stop the World*. Were these his feelings as the trip to Connecticut drew closer?

MERCY

I didn't want to start with this in the first place.

STOP THE WORLD

HEIRONYMUS

Look... We can still see each other.

MERCY

Oh, you! I wouldn't see you again – after this? All you ever wanted me for was one thing! All you ever worry about is yourself! You're so bloody selfish! Of course you don't love her! You don't love anyone but yourself! You don't know how to...

Joan's worries about her marriage could not have been allayed by her final scene. Whether or not Newley was aware that he had given her the words with which she could so easily have ended their relationship remains anyone's guess. It made uncomfortable reading for Joan but it wasn't until she saw the rushes of the scene that the truth of the script hit her. She then understood why she had been so distressed after each take. Surely this was Tony asking her to leave?

In the final moments of the film, a furious Polyester rushes onto the beach grabbing the children away from Heironymus:

POLYESTER

Darling! Are you crazy? Have you been here all night? I've been calling – Didn't you hear me calling? I didn't know what to think! I called the police! Your agent called the police! We called the hospitals! I've been out of my mind with worry! You do this kind of thing... You do it all the time. You don't think and you don't care... All of us could die for all you care... Well, I've had enough... I'm taking the children, yes – I am. I'm taking them back to Europe – anywhere, away from you. And this time I mean it. I really do mean it. This time I do...

But it is Merkin's revelation of his feelings towards intimate relationships with womankind (wholly penned by Newley), that may give a clearer understanding of Tony's own sentiment:

HEIRONYMUS

You know – watching this – I can honestly say there's never been a woman who commanded even a moment

of my regard once I'd made love to her. The flowers, the poems, the love songs, have all been – bribes. And I suddenly realise that, not only do I have no respect for women but – I may very well hate them. And it's really – I have really been committing a kind of – sexual murder. The ritual homicide of the female sex; forever reopening and stabbing the divine wound.

Self-glorification? Masturbatory? Perhaps, in as much as this was Newley's show, his creation, his production, his life. But the content of the movie points more convincingly to his own emotional turmoil, his inner confusion and self-loathing. Anthony Newley–Heironymus Merkin was not a happy man. Rather, here was a man who was questioning the very fabric of his existence and behaviour without leaving a stone unturned. Herman Raucher thought the film 'a public confession. A sort of penance. He wanted to show his life to his children.' And it is in that regard that it is all but impossible to disregard the poignancy that is present in seeing Newley as Heironymus recounting his 'life' to his own beloved Tara and Sacha. And he was trying to tell the truth. Pointing to the mountainous pile of film reels and books, Heironymus declaims:

Now you may be wondering, 'What is this big pile of – ' Well I'll tell you. You are looking at a monument to my first forty years. This shrine, this hallowed pile, is a complete pictorial, literary and sound history of my life. Nothing and no-one has been spared. It has been ruthlessly recreated from the Truth. No sham, fake, paste – no names have been changed to protect the guilty. You'll find no lies here, sir!

He is only too aware of his selfishness:

Some of you may have noticed a tendency on your Daddy's part not to give a – fig for others' feelings. This gets worse as Daddy gets older.

He reflects upon the similarities between himself and his unknown father.

Your father realises now – the way *your* father's father treated your father's mother was terrible. But what was twice as terrible was that your father was now acting in the *same* way with every woman he met.

He is disarmingly honest but sardonic in his response to the remarks made by his 'critics':

Right. You're quite right. It's not the best thing ever written. There are other things that are better. 'Birth of a Nation' was better – but can you remember one song?

STOP THE WORLD

He points out the predatory nature of his obsession with young girls:

Chapter VI. The Dream of Humbert-Humbert – or – Snow White meets Attila the Hun. The Casanova of the Lollipop Set.

His questions to God speak of desperation and insecurity:

Like I say – I'm not really a clever man. Not in the classical sense. But I *do* – have this compulsion to *know*. I want to know – why I do – these things. And I want to know how I fit into the scheme of things – and – *while* I'm here, I *do* want to do things without – screwing up.

This questing is undermined by his sneaking suspicion that to search for answers is futile:

Grandma's crying because she doesn't understand the cyclone that came out of her womb. Grandma's crying because crying is all there's left to do.

It is Polyester Poontang who sums up the tragicomic quality to Merkin-Newley's life. Commenting to Merkin on the play she has just watched, a Shakespearean treatment of Merkin's story so far, she observes:

It's very funny. But it's also very sad. Your baby dies and you don't really care. Your wife leaves you and – you're glad. Your only real friend seems to be the devil. The way you treat women is – bizarre. You don't really love – anyone. And then – then you take all this sadness; you sing songs about it – and ask us to laugh at you. I think it's more than a play. It is about you, isn't it?

'I'm really recreating myself over and over again,' Newley later confided in an interview. 'I am obsessed by a need to chronicle certain things – the image of a dead child, for instance – that keep returning in my life like a song, a need to drag up the old totems, the old questions.' How he felt he could go to such extremes in his first outing as a film director is difficult to comprehend. He must have been aware of the likelihood of his alienating both the critics and the public, not to mention the studio. But that was Newley: 'Everything he did was all Tony,' Peter Bren once said. And if Heironymus Merkin is a rites of passage movie for Anthony Newley, then Merkin's moment of hopeful clarity surely identifies Newley's own aspirations:

And the moral of the story is: Once you understand your own dragon, you don't have to be afraid any more. See what I mean.

Newley's search for an actress to play Mercy Humppe was reminiscent of that for Scarlett O'Hara. Casting took place at the Playboy Club and lasted

nearly three months. Tony wanted a 'look' – an *Alice in Wonderland* nymphet. He had plenty of girls to choose from as every up-and-coming starlet, nubile or otherwise, queued along the corridor (which, as Fraser recalled, 'you couldn't get down for tits') in order to reveal their talents to Mr Newley. Tony even called Anneke Wills in and they managed to rekindle a little of their forgotten passion in the lift on the ride up to his office. But as the weeks passed, Newley was losing hope of ever finding Merkin's 'child-lover', until one morning:

'Jude, who was that girl who just went down the elevator?' he asked excitedly.

Judy Seal, enclosed in her office, was unaware of anyone going anywhere. Tony asked her to call downstairs and find out. She dutifully rang the reception desk.

'A blonde girl? Oh, you mean Connie Kreski,' came the reply. 'That's Victor Lowndes' bird.'

Newley called the club owner personally and a meeting with his 'bird' was arranged. Connie Kreski, a twenty-one-year-old model, had recently prompted a minor *cause célèbre* and some embarrassment for the detergent manufacturers Procter and Gamble. Having already put her likeness on Ivory Snow – 'The Purest Detergent You Can Get' – they discovered that she had appeared 'kinda nude' in a recent *Playboy* magazine and had been named Miss Lady of Luck by Unit 102 of the US Forces in Vietnam. As far as Tony was concerned she was perfect. Blonde and angelic, she *was* Mercy Humppe. What she wasn't, however, was an actress. Tony didn't care: he had found his fantasy.

The film unit's stay in Malta was difficult. The explicitly erotic nature of the movie had to be concealed from the Catholic authorities who would have shut the unit down had they seen the rushes of the nude sequences. Some cans of film had to be smuggled off the island and Newley was threatened with jail when news of naked actors in a brass bed on the beach reached the local church leaders' ears. Although dry and sporadically sunny, the weather was not the cameraman's friend either: a veritable hurricane blew across the set every day of the shoot, causing havoc for the director of photography, Otto Heller. His assured murmurs of 'I make you beautiful' were frequently followed by 'Gotta go again', as another grain of sand soiled the lens. Newley's talent as an actor was undoubted but his ability as a director was less assured.

Judy had been impressed with Tony's lucidity of vision which he had demonstrated back in London when plotting his Fellini-inspired camera angles and shots, but he seemed unable to communicate his ideas once on the set. His strengths as a director were attenuated by his lack of knowledge about the camera's capabilities and his reliance upon Heller, an old-school photographer, limited the extent to which he could experiment. But experiment he did, with little regard for budget, which upset Universal, and his complete

disregard for the schedule eventually drove the crew to 'down tools'. Two months into shooting, seven union members walked off the set at 2:30 am only to be fired the following morning. Filming recommenced four days later *sans* make-up girl, *sans* continuity girl, *sans* property girl but with Maltese labour. For some the sitting around was welcome: Patricia Hayes described her time on Malta as the longest paid holiday of a lifetime.

Tony and Joan took care of the cast and would regularly delay their own departure from a location to ensure that everybody else had transport back to the hotels. Newley was popular and widely admired by his cast. Judy Cornwell thought him 'a hero and the most brilliant director who saw things from an actor's point of view. He included you in his aims and therefore you could give him what he was trying to achieve. He worked fast and was able to detach himself as an actor and step into different shoes.' She also noticed a retrospection in him 'that you expect from the very, very old. At times I felt he was seventy rather than thirty-six.' Bruce Forsyth too felt that he was in safe hands. He admired Newley as a performer and trusted his direction implicitly. He felt confident that whatever Tony told him to do would be 'for the best'.

But at times Newley could be less helpful, as a young and somewhat innocent Rosalind Knight discovered. She and her compatriot critics were placed in a tiny black enclosure with three selotape crosses on a black wall for their eye line. There they were meant to be watching a pornographic film. Tony vaguely directed their reactions: 'Be amazed, be horrified. What are you looking at?'

'If only he had told us what we were looking at, it would have been so much easier,' Knight bemoaned and added, 'I know at that stage in my life, I couldn't think of anything bad enough.'

Connie Kreski (renamed The Nun of Malta by Joan and Judy due to her habit of remaining in her hotel room awaiting telephone calls from Victor) was also rather mystified by the proceedings. Talking to the journalist, Donald Zec, about her underwater love scene with Tony, she commented on the directions within the script that called for them to swim to and fro like 'playful goldfish'.

Zec tentatively probed further: 'Why do you have to swim underwater like playful goldfish?'

Kreski looked perturbed and replied, 'They didn't tell me.'

Joan was less unsure. 'It doesn't seem to make sense until you see the rushes,' she said. 'Then suddenly it comes alive. I happen to think it is the work of a man who happens to be a genius.'

'Who happens to be your husband,' countered Zec.

'Who happens to be brilliant.' And directing the conversation to her own involvement in the movie, she continued, 'Of course there is a tremendous amount of sex in it – but there's a tremendous amount of sex everywhere, isn't there? My character is a girl who quaffs deeply from the cup of life. You don't actually see her quaffing. There is some quaffing you can't film. It will be implied quaffing... But a lot of it.'

Back in London, Newley and award-winning editor Bernard Gribble had the immense task of shaving forty-five minutes off the film's running time. Raucher was insistent that certain things should be cut. There had originally been five 'commercials' that interrupted the action and which portrayed Merkin's molestation of the 'actresses' involved. Raucher thought these diversions pointless, an opinion which led to fiery arguments between them, as Tony hated to have to cut anything. Tony eventually conceded and then paid his actors the unusual courtesy of calling them personally to tell them of the cuts. Raucher also commented on and suggested Newley get rid of the numerous shots of Heironymus's reactions when often the storyline was elsewhere.

Its eventual X-rating, demanded by the nudity alone, belied the true content of the film. Newley had created a phantasmagoria of clowns and puppets, dream dances and underwater ballets. He juxtaposed stand-up comics with classical actors, cheap gags with true pathos, and the poetic with the prosaic. His imagery was borrowed from Fellini and Salvador Dali in equal measure. The ten songs, with superb arrangements by Fraser, were as good as anything he had written before and two of them, 'When You Gotta Go' and 'On The Boards', found a regular slot in the cabaret sets of singers such as Streisand and Tommy Steele. Newley's own performance was both stylish and accomplished. *He* seemed to know what he was doing even if others about him were at a loss.

Can Heironymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness? was Newley's epic statement. Confused and complex, perhaps indulgent and excessive most certainly, but it had been made with 'love and naiveté' and thus as Newley said, 'it is very easy to destroy'.

What was the film about? Milton Berle thought he knew:

'It's about two hours.'

CHAPTER TEN

CHALK & CHEESE

NEWLEY RETURNED TO LOS ANGELES in the winter of 1968 a tired man, his energies sapped by the gargantuan effort he had made in producing and directing *Heironymus*. 'It wasn't even fun,' he complained. The achievement had been negated by the exhaustion. The pain and tension he had felt so acutely during the shoot in Malta had been like 'a steel band drawn tight' around his head. Yet he knew he would do it again. He was a driven man. His attraction to Connie Kreski had remained unrequited but he was beginning to be troubled by his fascination with young women. The release of the film had also jogged him into an awareness of just how peculiar it was to have bared his soul to the world – Ian Fraser had commented that the movie was in lieu of five years of therapy – so Newley decided to look for help through a course of intensive psychoanalysis. He was also depressed by his failing marriage. Some months earlier, he had been furious to find that Joanie too had been playing the field. His response to her observation that she was only doing what he had been doing for the past three years was immediate and surprising. He raised his fist and shouted, 'It's different for men!' This anger and unexpected jealousy however did not lead to a *rapprochement*; instead the Newleys came to an unspoken arrangement and although still living together, each quietly went their own way. It hadn't been easy for Joan, who had tried to make it work, and it seemed to her that Tony had never really needed her: she wasn't sure he needed anyone. She had also decided that she wanted to return to live in London. But for Newley that was still out of the question.

With few movie roles on offer and his determination to do his own thing intact, Tony filled the months by appearing as a guest on various TV specials. Now he was singing with Liza Minelli, Diahann Carroll and Sammy Davis Jr and was beginning to think he should revive the notion of starting his own cabaret act. The offer from Caesar's Palace back in 1965 had had to be postponed because of *Dolittle*, but there was nothing to stop him now. He knew also that outside the elite circles of Hollywood and the theatregoing cognoscenti of New York there were many who didn't know who Anthony Newley was. Sure, they knew the songs – but the writer? The cabaret circuit was a well trodden and highly lucrative way to reach the masses. Besides, the reviews for *Heironymus* gave Newley good enough reason to explore other avenues with which to shore up his success in America:

'Stop the World - I Want to Strip Off,' ran one. 'As self-indulgent as a burp,' said another, while the *Daily Telegraph* critic hit particularly hard: 'For pretentiousness and vulgarity, not to say tedium, *Can Heironymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness?* would be hard to equal.' The reviews weren't all bad and there was much (albeit grudging) admiration for Newley's 'one-man bandmanship'. The script even won the Writers' Guild of Great Britain award for best original screenplay. But Universal's marketing of the film hadn't helped secure an audience for the piece. *Heironymus* was ideally suited for the art house cinemas, so to launch it as a commercial movie like any western or comedy thriller was to bypass its true audience and leave it without any chance of recouping its relatively small budget. Tony resolved to stop reading reviews. He was tired of reviewers destroying his work without any credentials to do so. He'd had success upon success at the box offices of America and Britain, hadn't he? Yet he noted that the critics hadn't even given him an A for effort. Tony considered American and English critics eunuchs at an orgy, a bunch of inky-fingered character assassins, and as for their German counterparts: 'What do those bloody Germans know!! They're still awaiting The Adolf Hitler Story.'

Tony asked Ian Fraser to become his musical director and after several weeks of intense rehearsals, *Anthony Newley in Concert* (the *th* was now US soft) opened at The Cave in Vancouver prior to a short tour and his booking at Caesar's in August. He had chosen Canada to allow the act to settle before taking on the critical eyes and ears at Las Vegas, where Streisand and Elvis reigned supreme. He was nervous and justifiably so. He wasn't at all sure that he was capable of performing in such intimate surrounds as dinner theatre. He had hated his time behind the microphone all those years ago in England and it was bad enough having to do eight shows a week on Broadway, but the idea of performing two shows a night with the punters under his nose and nothing to hide behind but some banter and a black tie made his stomach turn. What helped to settle it was his recollection of the adulation of teenage girls and the warmth of an audience at the Shubert. And the cash.

The first night was a promising one. For all his fears, he wooed the audience with ease and received ovation after ovation. Newley viewed the proceedings through half-shut eyes which conveyed to the audience an impression of intense concentration when in fact he just didn't want to look.

The next morning Tony called a meeting with Fraser and the band. Arriving at his room in the luxurious Bay Shore Inn, Fraser found a distinctly agitated Newley. 'I'm not cut out to do this,' Tony stuttered. 'I want to get out.' Fraser tried to placate him and suggested they could work on the act and then make a decision. Tony agreed and Fraser set about finding a piano in the hotel. Some minutes later Tony and Ian walked into the magnificent three-bedroom

penthouse Presidential Suite that had been built for Jack Kennedy when on a visit to Canada. The vast lounge, with windows on three sides which afforded stunning views of the city and the Strait of Georgia, boasted a nine-foot grand piano. Newley joked dryly, 'If I stayed here, perhaps I could manage the shows.' His road manager laughed nervously, rang the lobby and Newley plus his entourage moved in. A little while later Tony commented on his earlier display of cold feet: 'Perhaps I *was* over-reacting.'

Having honed and polished the act during the tour, Tony finally reached Las Vegas. Petula Clark had been performing during the previous two weeks, along with a comedian and storyteller called, bizarrely, George Kirby. Newley himself used this name on occasion in order to avoid being recognised when phoning plumbers and the like. Thoughts of Clapton were never far away and the idea of attempting to find his father had been nagging him increasingly since filming *Heironymus* and embarking on therapy. He and Herman Raucher had even started work on a new project called *Hurray for Mr Bulldyke* based on Newley's memories of Oswald Street, and he had written to Aunt Addie asking for the date when the terraced houses were to be demolished as he wanted a memento from No 14. 'You know,' he wrote, 'the post that hits your bum when you slide down the bannisters.' On a visit to London later that year, he took Tara and Sacha to his first home and as the children ran around the near derelict building, Tony, cine-camera in hand, quietly filmed each room.

Newley's first night at Caesar's was a critical success. 'Newley comes on like a cockney Noël Coward. He's reserved, charming and brightly sophisticated. He's an accomplished performer who knows instinctively how to satisfy an audience. He turns them on and sends them home in the best of spirits,' cooed one reviewer, while a visiting critic from London declared him 'absolutely magnificent. Newley is now up there with Sammy Davis and Andy Williams as a top attraction. The biggest success there since Sinatra.'

The takings on the tables were up too. One evening Tony was visited by a representative of the hotel who explained that the men in suits were so pleased, they wished to buy him a little something as a token of gratitude or 'for being a good boy', as Newley thought. He replied flippantly that a chocolate brown E-Type Jaguar wouldn't go amiss. As he belted out the closing line of 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' on the night of his last performance, Tony was astonished to hear the rev of an engine behind him as on rolled, as requested, one chocolate brown E-Type, bound with an oversized ribbon and bow. Petula Clark had received a similar token of thanks two weeks earlier: a full length mink coat which she hadn't asked for and never wore. Tony drove home to Summit Drive, decided he didn't like the car and promptly sold it to his lawyer. It is more probable that he didn't like where the gift had come

from. It was common knowledge that the Mafia ran Vegas and Petula had mentioned to him how difficult it was to work there without getting involved with them.

On another visit to Caesar's, Tony held a reception for the singer Joe Williams at his house away from the Strip. (Newley hated staying at the hotel and always insisted on renting a house outside the town.) On the afternoon of the party, his on-site manager and one-time dancer Lou Spencer brought Bunny Pappas (Tony's secretary and another Gemini) a bottle of perfume. Spencer was very much a middle man between Tony and his employers. He knew the good guys from the bad guys and his job, in part, was to protect Tony from both. After Lou had left, Tony confiscated the bottle saying, 'We're not going to accept that bottle of perfume. You don't need that bottle of perfume; you don't know where that bottle of perfume came from. I'll just have that, thank you very much.'

Bunny surmised that Tony knew exactly who the perfume had come from. It was clearly someone who Tony didn't want Bunny to be involved with in any way, nor did he himself want to be beholden to whoever it was. Quite simply, Tony wanted to have nothing to do with, and always steered clear of, anything that connected him to the owners of the clubs. That didn't stop him enjoying the 'royal treatment' however – he'd had a ball on the Strip and was set to return in December 'with a nice raise in salary'. His three-month annual contract with Caesar's alone was worth \$1 million and Newley could double that with his TV appearances as well as visits to Reno, Lake Tahoe, San Francisco, St Louis, Detroit, Wisconsin, Westbury and Washington DC.

Ironically, Newley's bid to increase his following was only partly successful. Throughout his career as a lounge singer he rarely filled the rooms he played. But the clientele he did attract were often from the east coast and were generally high rollers. What the casinos lost on dinner bookings, they most surely gained on the crap tables. Tom Jones attracted the girls but Anthony Newley attracted the money.

By October 1969, Tony and Joan had decided upon a trial separation. What little was left of their friendship was being eaten away by the constant recriminations that ricocheted around the house. Summit Drive, once the nerve centre of a hip Hollywood where laughter and joy resided and the *it* couple thrived on the attention they received, was now just a place to argue, a place to hurl abuse *sotto voce* as the kids slept. They told friends they were hoping for a miracle but neither believed it would happen. How could it? Joan was already seeing an American called Ron Kass who was the head of Apple Records in London and her desire to return 'home' was increasing every day. Tony, who was now living in his office-cum-apartment on Doheny Drive, was also taking advantage of his new-found freedom and had been

seen around town with Charlotte Ford Niarchos. As far as he was concerned there was no known cure for the state of his marriage. He missed Sacha and Tara desperately though, and at times would wander up to the house where, unnoticed, he watched them play.

Tony was back on tour in the months leading up to Christmas but asked Bunny to buy Joan a mink coat for a present. It was wildly expensive and his secretary couldn't help but exclaim, 'And you're leaving her?'

'Yes. It's my guilt money,' he replied. 'I feel bad and she wants it.'

1970 began with the couple's decision to seek a divorce. Summing up the preceding decade, quite incredibly Newley wrote in his diary:

On reflection, the '60s has been the most miserable time of my life. My marriage to the incredible Joan, coupled to my overwhelming emotional problems, has seemed like a long nightmare. The only legacy from these frustrating years has been my children. With our divorce I hope to start a new life of self-discovery and eventual happiness. Via analysis I see a new horizon ahead in the promising '70s.

Joan returned, with the children, to London; Sammy and Altovise Davis bought the Summit Drive mansion and a settlement was agreed between Tony and Joan. She got the proceeds from the house and he would provide child support. Newley was severely depressed and became dependent on two or three conversations with his analyst each day. Being apart from the children was worse than he could have imagined. True, he had had little involvement in their everyday care and over the years had spent a great deal of time away from home, but at least they had been at his home. Now he felt bereft. He missed their playtime together and he missed their smiles in the morning.

He and Joan maintained regular contact and for a time a measure of affection for each other, but the consequences of the split gradually became apparent; the difficulties of sharing responsibility for the children with five thousand miles between them and Joan's seemingly endless but justifiable requests for more money quickly began to sour their relationship. In a telegram to Tony on 24 August Joan reproached him for his failure to keep his promise to have the children for a week: 'You should fulfil personal duties even for a few days. They disappointed situation difficult. Regards Joan.'

Newley was livid. He responded immediately: 'Will take children for week explain daddie working day and night to pay off divorce settlement. As regards remarks re parental duties two thousand dollars a month says you're a liar. What else is new? Newley.'

Newley's bitterness towards Joan began to find its way into his act: she was 'the British Open'; he needed the work to 'pay alimony to the famous Joan Collins'; or his favourite - 'to keep Joan Collins in the style she is

becoming accustomed to'. It was uncalled-for and untrue, and it was very un-Newley. The audiences, of course, lapped it up.

Through the machinations of his agent Sue Mengers, Tony was invited to direct *Summertime*, starring Jack Warden, Barbara Bel Geddes, Brenda Vaccaro, who had just made her own impressive debut in John Schlesinger's *Midnight Cowboy*,* and the as yet unknown Michael Douglas. The movie was to be produced by Kirk Douglas's Bryna Company and was very much a vehicle for his son, who had already played the part of Jerry McAdams in Ron Cowen's Pulitzer Prize-nominated stage play. *Summertime* was Tony's chance to convince Hollywood of his capabilities as a movie director; it was also a welcome distraction from the emotional struggles that he was going through.

The movie was an American story dealing with American issues – namely Vietnam and a young student's attempts to avoid being drafted into the army. His relationships with his father, girlfriend and a young tearaway he has befriended are all affected along the way. The play had been hailed as 'an exceedingly honest attempt to depict the generation gap in middle-class America', but it was a confusion of themes and ideas and Newley openly admitted to not understanding what the film was about at all. His apprehension on-set and melancholy off-set were noticed.

Brenda Vaccaro thought Tony out of his depth and that he wasn't functioning well. He lacked the command of a director, seemed not to know what he wanted and although he had a competent crew around him it was clear that he was not master of the ship; in fact, 'it was like he was in the wrong boat'. She, like Judy Cornwell before her, felt though that he was an actor's director who gave them freedom and was very forthcoming about what he thought they could do.

But Tony was in 'a bad place', as Brenda observed. Furthermore: 'He was a man in total depression, questioning himself. Who was he? What should he be doing? Why did this happen to him? The divorce was a big blow to him.' He was exhausted too. 'I remember him sleeping a lot, catching glimpses of it in the back of his car. He was so vulnerable and was capable of being crushed, very easily.'

Behind the camera Tony was as charming, witty and caring as ever, although his relationship with Michael Douglas was somewhat strained. Michael and Brenda's burgeoning romance may have played a part in Tony's feelings towards the young actor. He certainly seemed to compete with Douglas for her attention. Perhaps he thought Douglas was getting an easy ride. He was never confrontational but he was mischievous and one day, rolling up a piece

* This feature won the Best Picture Oscar that year along with nominations for Dustin Hoffman, Jon Voight and Sylvia Miles.

of paper into a tight ball, he fired it across the set, hitting Douglas square on his forehead. Nobody had seen him launch the missile, except Brenda.

Despite good reviews for all involved, *Summertime* flopped. It marked the end of Bryna, 'a totally cock-eyed company' as far as Vaccaro was concerned, and it put paid to Newley's ambitions to be a movie director. In four short years, Tony's film career in America, as both actor and director, had come and gone.

Newley didn't have time to grieve. He had begun sketching out a new musical about Napoleon which was to be a vehicle for himself and Barbra Streisand – an idea he had first talked about with Lionel Bart back in '61 but with Shirley Bassey as Josephine. (This later attempt, like the first, would come to nothing.) More pressingly, he and Bricusse had been approached by David Wolper to write the songs for his production of Roald Dahl's classic children's story, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, renamed for the movie *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* and starring Gene Wilder as Wonka. Brickman and Newberg had had little professional contact since jotting down the title song for *Sweet November* and Tony's separation from Joan had driven a small but discernible wedge between Tony and the other three members of The Famous Four. And while *Willy Wonka* reunited their talents, it did not bring the writers together physically at any stage: Newley composed the melodies in California, where Ian Fraser transcribed and recorded them; Fraser then sent the tapes to Bricusse in France; Bricusse returned the finished lyrics to Fraser; who in turn passed them on to the film's musical director, Walter Scharf in Munich. Somewhat disparagingly, Scharf referred to the writers as 'the Hummers'. Neither Bricusse nor Newley met Dahl.

The writers set out once again to compose songs that could have a life outside the movie, and both considered the enchanting 'Pure Imagination' to be an odds-on hit (Newley had hummed the melody of that one over the phone to Fraser who was in England, while Bricusse sent the lyrics from Malta). But the hit came some twelve months later in the guise of Sammy Davis Jr's recording of 'The Candy Man' – an astonishing outcome given the song's rendering in the film.

Newberg and Brickman were invited by Wolper and the director Mel Stuart to an early screening of the movie and the pair hated it. Hated it! 'They thought they had got *Mary Poppins*,' Bricusse recalled, 'and we thought it was terrible. Gene Wilder was not musical, I mean a beautiful song like 'Pure Imagination' was never performed, he kept stopping after every four bars and doing bits of business.' Bricusse had never understood why Wilder, though a good actor, was at thirty-four years old cast as an old man retiring from the candy business. His incomprehension turned to dismay when he discovered that his friend and idol Fred Astaire had asked to play the role,

only to be turned down by Wolper *et al.* But their sharpest criticism lay elsewhere. 'The actor who sang "The Candy Man" in the sweet shop,' recalled Bricusse, 'I would have had shot then and there.' Newley too was horrified at Aubrey Woods' serviceable but unremarkable rendition of the song and offered to play that part himself, forgoing any performance fee, to 'make the song work'. Stuart refused. He couldn't see that there was a problem and was concerned that Newley's presence in the movie would upset the balance (as surely it would have done) and that the whole would become 'shtick'.

The film opened to mixed reviews but Bricusse and Newley were nominated for a Best Original Score Oscar and Sammy's disc became a number one hit, selling over five million copies. It was his biggest selling single ever and he hadn't even wanted to record it. Bricusse wrote to Newley, 'For a first shot in six years, written on land, sea, air, tapes, planes and telephones, I don't think we did too badly!' The two friends vowed to work together again 'properly' and soon.

With some new material for his act, Newley went back to Las Vegas. On the road he tried hard to take care of himself. He was specific about his diet and demanded that his food be cooked to order. A few idiosyncrasies remained: the chewed meat still adorned his plates and toast had to arrive burnt black. He popped every vitamin pill available and each day would spend an hour jogging at a local park. He used a basket of towels to dry himself after taking a shower as he required a separate towel for each limb. He was also beginning to have serious difficulties sleeping, and to ensure some rest toured with ear plugs, eye masks and his favourite pillow. He went to considerable lengths to avoid losing his voice, as a plaque erected some years later in the No 1 dressing room at the Desert Inn attested:

Dear Fellow Performer,

THE MANAGEMENT HAVE KINDLY INSTALLED HOT STEAM IN THIS SHOWER CUBICLE. TEN MINUTES OF STEAM INHALATION BEFORE EACH SHOW WILL PRACTICALLY GUARANTEE PROTECTION AGAINST 'VEGAS THROAT'.

HAVE A HAPPY ENGAGEMENT.

Anthony Newley

Tony was revered by many of the other major performers on the strip. His multiplicity of talents left him peerless, unrivalled – not even Sammy wrote the songs he sang. The Genius of Anthony Newley was how they referred to him. Newley cringed. 'Everybody liked him. Everybody wanted him at their table,' Bunny remembered, 'he was so sophisticated and so hip.' Friends and fans filled his dressing room after every show and Newley was always gracious

and generous with his time. But it was when he was alone that he could relax. He drank wine though not to excess and he smoked dope. Dope was the thing: second only to his interest in women, of course. Cabaret may very well have been a way to reach the masses but for Tony it was a way to reach masses of girls. 'Tony liked sex,' Bunny stated. 'He didn't have a lot of other hobbies. He didn't play golf, he didn't swim, he didn't like going to parties, he liked women. He wasn't the only one at it but his appetite for women was voracious.' In Lake Tahoe, Newley even had someone on the payroll whose sole task was to 'introduce' women, be they showgirls or members of the audience, to the singer.

Among his conquests were Nicole, Lalla, Orio, Charlotte, Jilly, Victoria, Charlene, Polly, Joey, Wendy, Mercy, Ellen, Stephanie, Jan and Marsha; three-day affairs that lingered for a few weeks before each received the gentle, loving and often identical brush-off via Bunny's typed letter explaining that Mr Newley was up to his eyeballs and would be for some time to come, that he would write as soon as he could. It seemed that Joan was right: the chase was everything. All of them came and went, except one: Danielle Mardi. She was a dancer in Tom Jones's show and had met Tony during his second season at Caesar's in '69. They both felt there was something special about their relationship, but neither Tony nor she had thought it would continue beyond Vegas. Their brief 'for the moment' fling, filled with opium-cured grass and picnics on Lake Mead, soon blossomed into a fully fledged love affair that brought added complications to his already crumbling marriage. Danielle could listen and seemed entirely empathetic and in step with Tony's inner self. She was his Tinkerbelle; he her Peter. 'I have chosen you,' she wrote, 'because I sensed a tear lingering near the periphery of your joy.' Beyond their affair, Tony had found an enduring and vital friendship that would stretch across the years.

Together they found 9477 Lloyd Crest and moved there in February 1971 with Gracie and Ron. Perched on a hill in Coldwater Canyon, Lloyd Crest's pretty stone front and its courtyard entry reminded Tony of an English country house. The main living room opened onto a flagged patio and pool which led to the garden, stocked with roses and lemon trees. Tony fell in love with it instantly. It was airy yet secluded, the rooms were elegant, and one, overlooking the canyon and surrounding hills, was filled with sunlight all the day long. This was the 'nap' room where Peter and Tink could while away the afternoons in cosy talks about his children, life and careers, magic and music and desires. They explored Zen Buddhism together and discussed Tony's therapy; they were intimates, soulmates. For a few short months Tony and Tink played. They joined forces with Lola Falana and played some more. 'Tony was fascinated by the two of us together,' Tink recalled. 'We all got silly one day and went to

this place on Sunset and had our bums cast in plaster and displayed. Tony did his penis. Lola and I were dubbed "the best salt and pepper buns in town". Tony's need for other women, however, was undiminished. They had been in Lloyd Crest for only a few weeks when she came home to find several extra pairs of ladies shoes outside the closed master bedroom door. Tink sat quietly for a while and made some choices. She considered his unfaithfulness to her – no, to everyone – as a manifestation of his own lack of faith in himself. He was just incapable of faithfulness and although she was willing to love him unconditionally, she knew she wanted something more secure. Tink moved out shortly afterwards although they continued their affair. There were no secrets, no judgements, just an acceptance that the love Tink received was all that Tony was capable of giving at that time and that the life they shared would surely end.

While playing Harrah's at Lake Tahoe, Newley was approached by the seasoned comedian and award-winning actor, Buddy Hackett. Hackett, who restricted his risqué nightclub act to the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas, had toured with Eddie Fisher some four years earlier in much larger venues and to great acclaim. He now wanted to repeat that success with Newley.

'What for?' Tony replied curtly. Hackett almost turned on his heel. Tony continued, 'Who opens and what's the billing?'

'The billing is absolutely even. You wanna open? You can open.' Hackett was taken aback by Tony's reaction, hurt even. He challenged the actor some weeks later.

'You were so nasty to me,' Hackett said.

'I was, wasn't I,' said Tony sheepishly.

'Yes, but I know where it came from. Fear of work,' Buddy asserted.

Tony thought for a moment and then offered, 'Don't you think we all have it?'

The nine-week tour was a sell-out and the two performers became fast friends. As Hackett remarked, had Tony been a golfer, they'd have had a complete life together. Buddy's admiration of Tony's talent never faded. He listened to the singer's show each night over the tannoy and enjoyed Newley's ability 'to take complexity and put it into a few words...a few gestures.' Tony needed no extra help to find girls with Hackett around either, as during his set the comic would pick on a pretty girl in the audience and say, 'My poor friend has no one to have a drink with after the show, would you go with him?' The tactic worked too. One morning, Hackett picked up a likely companion for his friend, took her back to Newley's apartment, led her into the bathroom, suggested she take off her clothes and left her to join Newley in the shower.

The two performers were different in many ways. Hackett was self-sufficient, he produced his own shows, organised his own schedules, hammered out his own deals. He employed a lawyer who doubled as his manager, eschewed agents, accountants and any number of hangers-on or 'nachtschleppers' as he called them, and he knew exactly how many dollars he earned. Newley removed himself from decision-making in all areas of his life not least when it came to money. 'I'm too busy, you take care of that,' was a familiar refrain on Doheney Drive, but his reluctance to take control in this area cost him dearly.

Newley was represented by ICM, managed by Ray Katz and Sandy Gallin; Jack Schwarzman was his attorney and business manager; he ran an office, employed a secretary (paid handsomely), accountants, a road manager and a dresser. His fees covered the wages of his musical director, his drummer, his sound technician; he always tipped the bands and stage crews generously; he took limousines wherever he went in Los Angeles and he paid Ron and Gracie a monthly stipend. It was all 'toy money' as far as Newley was concerned and there was so much of it to spend. His attempts at ordering his finances were irrational and ridiculous. He would challenge Bunny over a seventy-five-cent phone call to an unknown number he had discovered on his bill but would then happily spend \$500 dollars on a gift for a dresser he had known but a week. Newley had no idea how much he earned. There were his cabaret fees, his TV fees, the royalties from his shows, the music sales, his records, his films, his songs. The money came in and he spent it. He owned a \$250,000 house, a chocolate brown Corvette, a vast collection of clothes; yet in 1970 he was forced to take a loan of \$50,000 to cover his debts. Bricusse meanwhile, a man of no little financial acumen, had acquired several houses, a growing art collection and a great deal of security. But Newley never changed. He lived for the moment and spent accordingly.

Hackett was not liked by Bunny Pappas nor indeed by many of Newley's girlfriends. The comedian was renowned for his lexicon of expletives but many people considered the man as foul as the language he used. However, he sat beside Bunny on one flight and informed her that Tony had had words with him: 'He told me that if I say one four-letter word in front of you, I'm out.' And it was Buddy Hackett who was the unwitting catalyst in bringing Tony and his next wife together.

Dareth Rich was an air stewardess with American Airlines. Hearing that Hackett was on her flight to Washington, Dareth went through to the first class cabin to say hello. She knew of Buddy Hackett through her friend Christine Costello, daughter of the American comic actor Lou. Christine had been cared for by the Hacketts after her parents had died and Dareth wanted to tell Buddy how loved and adored he was by her. As Dareth spoke to Hackett, she became aware of Newley and the two were introduced. Sometime

later during the flight, she returned to chat to Hackett and Newley interrupted, asking her if she had a moment to talk with him. The two climbed the stairs to the lounge and seeing that they were alone, Tony took the stranger by the hand, leaned forward and kissed her.

'I want to see you again,' he smiled.

'Mr Newley, you are going to get me fired,' Dareth replied, startled. 'It is inappropriate to kiss a passenger.'

'Well, if you get fired, I'll hire you the best attorney that money can buy.'

Newley called her at her hotel that evening, telling her to watch a TV chat show that he was appearing on the next morning. Surrounded by her thirteen colleagues from the Airline, Dareth tuned in. Buddy Hackett was talking: 'Well, the trip was kind of interesting. Tony met somebody and I swear she's going to be his next wife.' At that moment amidst the screams of her friends, came a knock at her door. Standing in the corridor were three hotel staff, each holding a rose-filled vase. 'They were all for me,' Dareth recalled, 'and they were from Tony.'

Newley called her daily and invited her to Maryland to see the show. Dareth followed him around the country as and when she could during the tour and by the end of the summer Tony had asked her to move in to Lloyd Crest. Dareth Rich was a far remove from Joan Collins. Beautiful but understated, with no links to show business, she represented for Tony the possibility of enjoying a 'normal' relationship, a relationship away from the limelight and free from competition between the two protagonists. She was also seventeen years his junior.

Tony was also joined on the tour by Bricusse. The two now had a project in hand and Brickman took to the road so that they could work together. *It's a Funny Old World We Live in - But the World's Not Entirely to Blame*, re-titled *The Good Old Bad Old Days* was, as Bricusse later described it, 'a modest little saga about Man, Life, Death, God and The Devil, with the history of the world thrown in (nothing pretentious!)' and was to mark Newley's return to the Broadway stage.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

I'M ALL I NEED

THE MUSICAL WAS WRITTEN in Lake Tahoe, Reno and Las Vegas and proved to be a disagreeable and difficult experience for both Newley and Bricusse. Newley's shows played at eight in the evening and midnight, after which he would stay awake until six o'clock and then sleep through the morning. The two writers only came together between two and five o'clock in the afternoon, which drove Bricusse beserk, Nevada not being his favourite place anyway. Newley found the demands of performing and writing exhausting and resented Bricusse's insistence that they work each day. It was clear that something had changed in his feelings towards his collaborator. Since the divorce, Newley had distanced himself from the frenzied existence that he had once enjoyed with Joan: he had slowed down; Bricusse, on the other hand, was still sprinting. The collaborators' lifestyles were now radically different. Leslie and Evie spent the year moving from home to home; they partied and dined out with friends on a daily basis and Bricusse always had at least three projects on the go at any one time. Newley was a homebody – 'a hothouse plant', he said – who couldn't care if he never went out again and who worked better if he could focus on one thing and one thing alone. Newley doubted that Bricusse ever stopped anywhere long enough to enjoy anything truly. He was always planning the next event, the next trip, the next dinner. Bricusse would have said that he was simply enjoying the lunch, dinner or whatever enough to be planning the next one. Both men were aware of the great differences in their personalities and in their individual outlooks on life that had developed and bifurcated over the years, but the crucial fact remained: nothing had changed when it came to writing songs together. Working together remained exciting and fulfilling with hours of laughter and smiles. Being together had become something less gratifying.

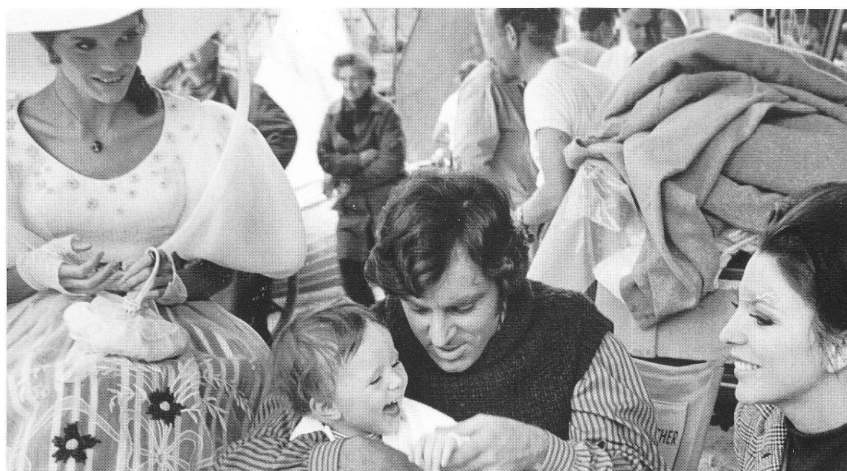
On Dareth's suggestion, Tony decided to hire a private detective to search for his father. The need to know more about this man called George Kirby had become increasingly important and it was clear that Gracie was never going to fill in the missing pieces. Newley called his attorney and was amazed when, ten days later, a private investigator contacted him: 'George Thomas Kirby is alive and living outside London, his wife Nell is seriously ill and is not expected to survive much longer. He was born on 27 November 1888, his

Photographer unknown



Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University

TOP: Cocky and Sir hit Broadway – Tony with Cyril Ritchard
BOTTOM: The smell of the crowd



Bob Willoughby



Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University

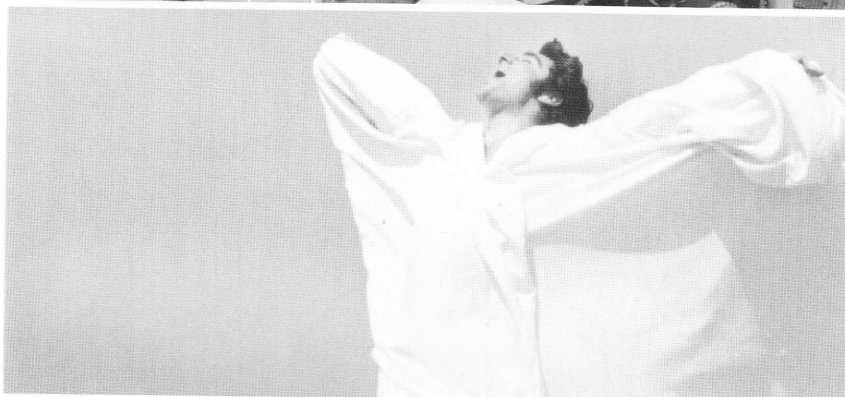


Photographer unknown

TOP TO BOTTOM: Tony's girls – on the set of *Doctor Dolittle* with Samantha Eggar; Agreeing to differ... Joan Collins, Rex Harrison and Tony at the UK premiere; Cabaret debut – The Cave, Vancouver (1969)



Photographer unknown

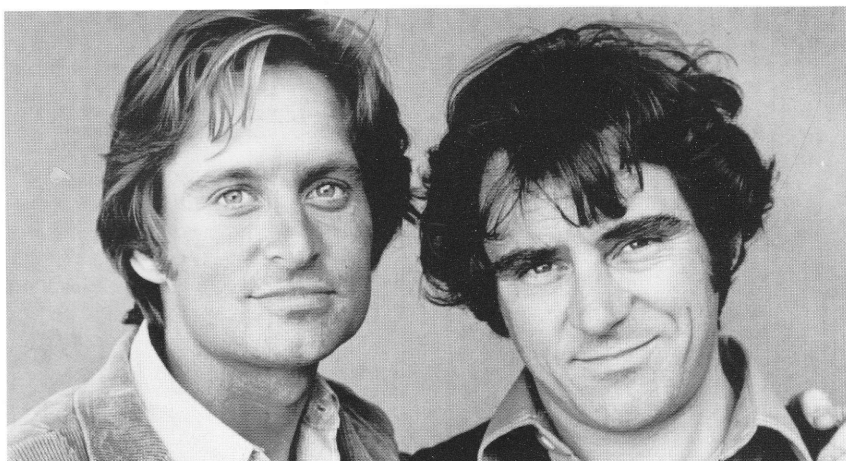


Photographer unknown

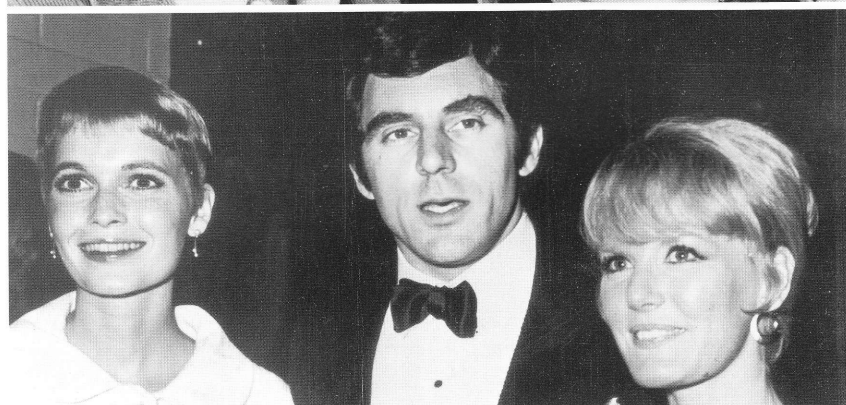


Photographer unknown

TOP TO BOTTOM: Heaven... Heironymus Merkin holds onto a naked Mercy Humpe (Connie Kreski); 'I'm all I need...' – Newley takes on God; George Jessel as The Presence with Tony on the set of *Heironymus*



Photographer unknown



Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University

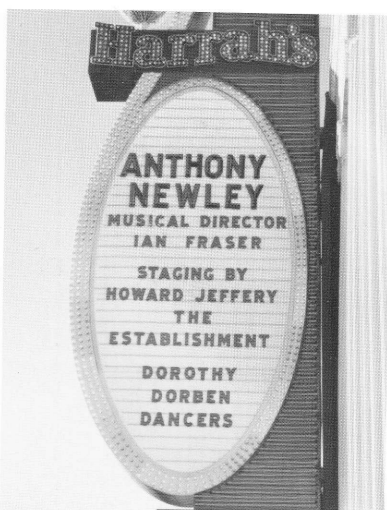


Photographer unknown

TOP TO BOTTOM: Michael Douglas presents Tony with the Writers' Guild Award during filming of *Summertime*; Post show with Mia Farrow and Petula Clark; Dareth and Tony's love ceremony at Lloyd Crest



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown

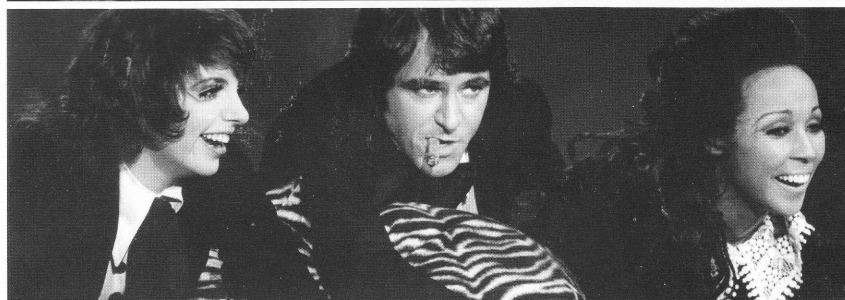
TOP TO RIGHT (L TO R): Happy days... Tony and Sacha at Lloyd Crest; Harrah's Casino (early 1970s); Happy families? with George and Gracie; David Hemmings, Jill Bennett, Tony and David Warner make the best of *Quilp*



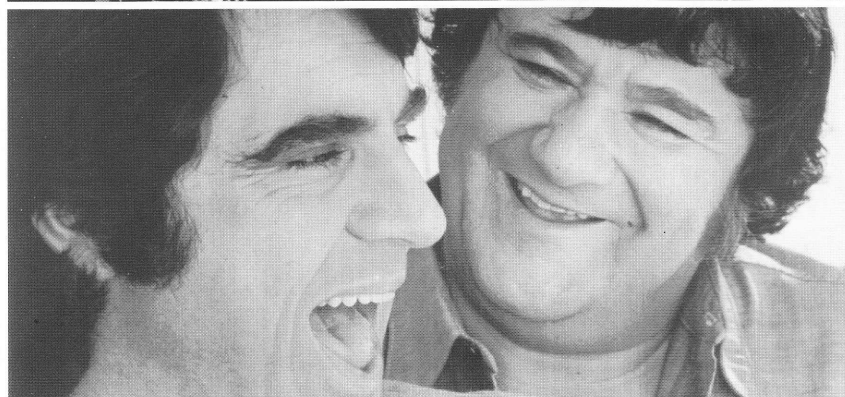
Photographer unknown



Las Vegas News Bureau



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown

TOP TO BOTTOM: Tony and Tom Jones; Magic moments with Burt Bacharach; Grrr... Tony with Liza Minelli and Diahann Carroll; Tony and Buddy Hackett

Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown

CBS / David Lombard / Anthony Newley Collection Special Collections at Boston University



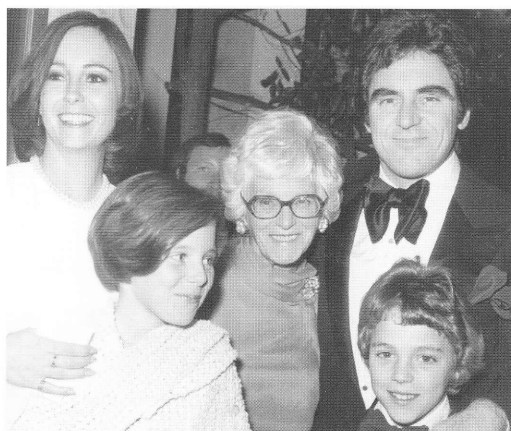
Photographer unknown



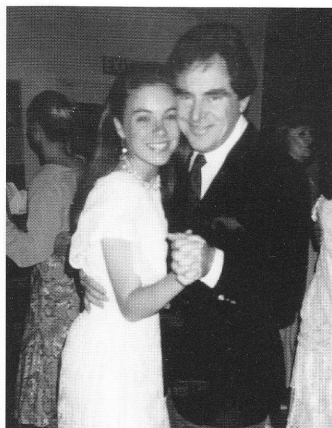
Photographer unknown

TOP TO BOTTOM (L TO R): Tony in cabaret with Alan King; with Bob Newhart; with Henry Mancini; Tony in Wonderland with Jayne Meadows, Red Buttons and Carol Channing; Tony and Dareth with the Mancinis, the Bergmans and Anne Bancroft

Nate Cutler



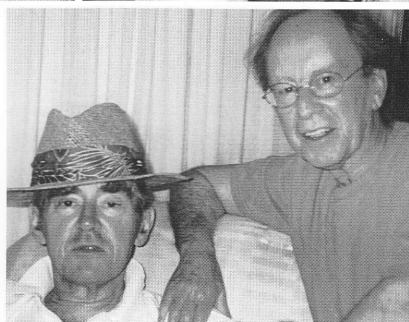
Photographer unknown



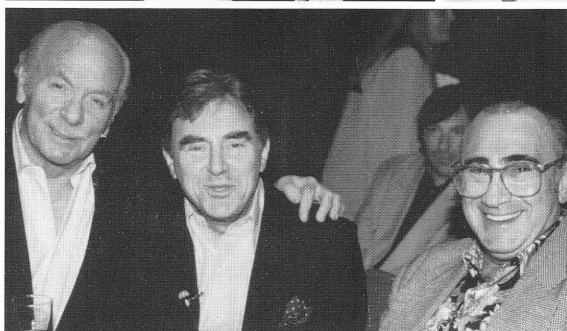
Gina Fratini



Photographer unknown / Ian Fraser



Photographer unknown / Herbert Kretzmer



Newley



Photographer unknown / Gina Fratini



TOP TO BOTTOM (L TO R): Dareth, Gracie, Tony, Tara and Sacha; Father's Dance at Shelby's graduation; Good friends... Tony and Joan (1990s); Tony and Ian Fraser – their last meeting (Spring 1999); Old friends: Tony with Herbert Kretzmer and Lionel Bart; Tony and Christopher; Tony and Gina on their first day at Ocean Drive in Florida (Autumn 1998)

telephone number is _____. Is there anything else you want to know?' After so many years of knowing nothing, suddenly Newley knew every detail of his father's life, from the amount of money he had in his bank account to the colour of his front door. He sat quietly. He had been fatherless for forty years. Ever since he could remember, his bastardy had fashioned and influenced every thought and decision he had made. It had made him question his very worth. It was, he believed, the cause of his fractured self and his inability to join the pieces of his life together; the distorting force that had both corrupted and fashioned him and over which he had prevailed. Anthony Newley was Anthony Newley, father or no.

Exercising an uncharacteristic caution, Newley had his secretary send a Christmas card which he signed 'Tony'. Kirby responded immediately with a short but quizzical letter wondering if his son had really meant to get in touch with him and expressing his disbelief that after so many years Tony should think to remember him at all. He also expressed his desire to meet Tony personally before it was too late. Newley picked up the phone:

'Hello, is that George Kirby? My name is Tony Newley.'

An old voice came back down the line and said, 'Well, hello son.'

Newley flew to London. Kirby had agreed to meet him but had made it clear that he didn't want to discuss his relationship with Grace. On a cold January afternoon in 1972, Tony came face to face with his father. He was surprised when the eighty-two-year-old answered the door. He had always imagined his dad to be taller than himself, as all dads should surely be, yet here he was, a small and neat old man. They talked for several hours and Newley discovered that Kirby had always known who his son was; he had watched his movies, attended *Cranks* and *Stop the World* and had a veritable Anthony Newley archive of ticket stubs, theatre programmes, newspaper clippings and photograph albums. Unknowingly, Tony had been performing to his father throughout his career.

The next day, Tony paid another visit, this time with Sacha and Tara, before returning to Los Angeles.

On 18 February, he wrote to Kirby:

My Dearest Dad,

We waited thirty-five years to write this letter... And now I don't know what to say. Except how happy I am to have found you. I feel very sorry for myself. Both you and the children are so far away from me.

How is Nell? It has become obvious to me over the last few years how important a part Nell has played in my life. She has

represented the one force that stood between myself and happiness (e.g. You). She has appeared in heavy disguise among the many women I've known. I've always tried to appease her...trying to make her like me... Even today. Poor Nell still looms over our lives... I was scared to ask if I could come to the hospital to see her (I have so many dragons to lay George). I just wanted to see her as a human being instead of some wicked stepmother out of a fairy story.

There's no time for pretending with you and I. I miss you already and think of you a lot. Mum sends her love as do I of course.

Your ever loving

Tony

Tony didn't know that Nell Kirby, perhaps like all 'wicked stepmothers' at the end of a fairytale, had died on 17 February, the day before he had put pen to paper. Gracie had separated from Ron after hearing the news that Tony had found his father and she and George began to correspond. In April, Kirby flew out to Los Angeles to stay with Tony and Dareth. As George descended from the plane, an expectant Gracie (now in her late sixties herself) turned to Tony and said, 'Oh, my God, he's so old.'

George and Grace were like old friends; they spent each day together and took a trip to Las Vegas to see Tony at Caesar's where they were spotlighted during the show as their son retold their extraordinary tale to the audience. It was all too much for George: he broke down in the dressing room after the show. In May, Kirby flew back to England and although there had been little evidence of anything more than a renewed friendship between herself and George, Gracie filed for a divorce from her husband of thirty-three years. Ron Gardiner surprised everybody by moving in immediately with the Bricusse's housekeeper, Lucy. Apparently he had been seeing her for some time and the two married soon after the decree absolute had been granted. Kirby returned in June and moved, with Grace, into an apartment provided by Tony, for the duration of his stay. In the same month Tony and Dareth, eschewing marriage, held a Love Ceremony on the sun-drenched lawns of Lloyd Crest. With Newley dressed in a full length kaftan (shades of *Heironymus!*) he and Dee Dee declared their love for one another.

The Good Old Bad Old Days or *GOBOD*, as Newberg and Brickman now referred to it, had got as far as pre-production in New York at the end of the 1971 when the producer, James Nederlander, unexpectedly pulled out. Bernard Delfont came to the writers' rescue and a short tour and West End opening was set for December 1972. This change of plan not only deprived Newley of his chance to return to Broadway but also robbed him of Ian Fraser – both as

conductor for *GOBOD* (Delfont being unwilling to pay for him to join the UK company) and as permanent musical director for the cabaret circuit. Julie Andrews had approached Fraser days before their departure to New York, asking him to consider becoming her MD. Fraser had declined, as he was committed to the Bricusse/Newley project, but once the *Nederlanders* had pulled the plug he called Miss Andrews to see if the invitation was still there. 'When can you start?' came the response.* In the end, Fraser wrote the overture for *GOBOD* and sent the copies to London.

In August, Newley and the now pregnant Dareth joined the Bricusses in London to continue working on the book before casting and rehearsals began a month later – a month which Dareth spent in hospital after nearly losing the baby she was carrying. Bricusse and Newley struggled with the book. They had written the show's eighteen songs – scribbled on a varied assortment of hotel notepaper – in six weeks, but the script had been passed between them for over a year and was now on its fourteenth rewrite. Their friendship was suffering too: 'I get a little hysterical in making my point to Brickman,' Newley wrote in his diary, 'terrified before the event that he'll disagree with me.' They persevered nevertheless, with Newley vowing that there would be 'no more books for Bricusse and Newley. From now on it's just the scores.'

Disley Jones joined the *GOBOD* team as designer, Anthony Mendleson provided the costume designs, and Fraser was replaced by Alf Raulston who was himself replaced by Robert Mandell. The irascible but highly talented Paddy Stone whom Newley had appeared with in J Lee Thompson's 1956 film adaptation of J B Priestley's *The Good Companions*,[†] came in as choreographer. Casting the show proved difficult: the auditions for the most part were tedious, although one afternoon's session was momentarily lightened by Tommy Steele's unscheduled arrival on to the stage, which Newley welcomed by hurling sugar cubes at him. There was brief respite also from the stress of pre-production when Tony and Sammy Davis made a dazzling contribution to Burt Bacharach's TV special, *Burt Bacharach and Associates* (a performance that stands as a testament to their unique and unsurpassed talents as entertainers). But in general, Newley was disappointed with the quality of performer he saw in London and concluded that there was 'no pool of musical comedy talent anymore. In America, yes, because it's still some kind of Mecca, but here, no.' The *GOBOD* cast eventually included Bill Kerr, Julia Sutton and Paul Bacon.

* Thus began a working relationship with Julie Andrews that would last for twenty-nine years, during which Fraser garnered eleven Emmy Awards.

† Celia Johnson, Eric Portman and John Fraser starred in this unremarkable 1950s update.

Newley's temporary move to London meant in theory that he should see Tara and Sacha on a more regular basis, but his self-imposed involvement with the show prevented him from putting this into practice and ultimately it was Sacha's doctor who advised Newley that he should spend more time with his son. The acrimony between Joan and Tony was at an all-time high and although there were regular packages from the children, any communication between the parents went via their respective solicitors or the children's nanny. Determined to do his best, Tony tried to put more time aside to see his family.

Meanwhile the 'back to the beginning', laid-bare characteristics of *Stop the World* and *Greasepaint* were replaced with a 'more is definitely more' attitude for *GOBOD*. The empty stage and single costume simplicity of those previous shows had gone; this production was lavish in the extreme. The cast included eleven principals and a chorus of twenty-two, supported by a twenty-one piece orchestra. Jones's sets were numerous (the show's story spanned the ages and took in the pilgrims' landings, the French Revolution, the American slave trade and the evils of Broadway) and spectacular, and one piece, God's throne, was so heavy that the fly tower grid in Nottingham began to collapse under its weight, causing the show's opening to be postponed for several days while urgent repairs were carried out. The costume designs were equally impressive, although Newley had heated discussions with Mendleson over the designer's reluctance to 'fantasise the costumes'. The budget said it all: some eleven years after Delfont invested £6,000 in *Stop the World*, production costs on *The Good Old Bad Old Days* totalled £100,000.

The score of *GOBOD* was Bricusse and Newley's weakest so far in that it was inconsistent in its sentiment and quality. The adroit satire of 'A Cotton Pickin' Moon' in which a band of blackface minstrels (still a regular feature on British television at that time) joyously sing of their condition with such lines as:

Wid de Mississippi sippin'
An' de paddle-wheels a-dippin'
An' mah dear ole massa whippin' me!

sat uncomfortably with the mawkish 'The Fool Who Dared to Dream':

And we must learn
Some things are more than they seem!
And the world belongs
To the fool who dares to dream!

And the impressive 'The Good Things in Life' (a long-time favourite of Bricusse's) along with the magical 'I Do Not Love You' showed the ability of the two writers to the full, whereas 'It's a Musical World' and 'The People

Tree' seemed akin to nursery songs, but without the beguiling attributes of *Stop the World*'s 'ABC' song, *Greasepaint*'s 'The Beautiful Land' or even 'The Candy Man' from *Willy Wonka*.

'This is not a religious musical,' Newley said. 'The story is of a meeting between The Devil (Bubba) and God (Gramps) at which God says he is fed up with Man. The Devil turns advocate for Man and says that humanity is more the victim than the criminal.' He continued, 'There are a lot of heavy questions raised during the piece in a very Light Comedy way, which we wouldn't even pretend to know the answers to. In fact God and the Devil go off on holiday together at the end of the piece, leaving you to it. It's a pantomime, really, for grown ups.'

The *Times* reviewer was not convinced: 'To fortunate clowns, like Charlie Chaplin, it only occurs late in life that they have a message for the world. Anthony Newley contracted this delusion at an early date in *Stop the World* and in the ten years since his last appearance on the London stage, the malady has spread to the terminal state visible in this unspeakable new musical.' Certainly the overall tone of the piece was preachy, and such well-meaning but trite lyrics as found in 'What's the Matter God?' were little more than tiresome:

What's the Matter God?
 Can't you take a joke?
 Can't you face
 This crazy place
 We call the world?
 Can't you face the truth –
 Funny but sad –
 That all the world's gone mad?
 Just look around!
 What do you see?
 Nothing but torment and misery!
 What ever happened
 To man's precious daydream?
 Why can he never be free...?

Gramps and Bubba's philosophical debates may have failed to excite the critics, but Newley's performance as Bubba was universally applauded. He was 'one helluva performer', said the *Evening News*, with 'an electricity about his singing' ran the *Tatler*, and his presence in the West End, complete with horns and erectile tail, was attraction enough to boost ticket sales. Delfont had taken a leaf out of Merrick's book when it came to promoting the show, as Newley's own recording of the title song had been joined by versions from Frankie Vaughan, Tony Bennett and Sammy Davis Jr before the show premiered

on 20 December. This same song was taken up by Bruce Forsyth and George Burns and was transformed into an audience singalong on Des O'Connor's TV show at that time.

GOBOD remained at the Prince of Wales theatre for some nine months, repaying Delfont's investment in full and one song, 'The People Tree', won an Ivor Novello Award. Newley asked his leading lady, Julia Sutton, if she would attend the ceremony to collect the award explaining that he'd never liked such events. Julia dutifully obliged and returned with the statue wrapped in a plastic bag. She presented it to Newley, who without looking at her or the award said, 'Put it over there, love... Thanks.'

Tony's thoughts were elsewhere. George had decided to move to California to live with Gracie, and Newley had bought them a new home down at the Palisades on the beach in Los Angeles. He wrote to his father in January 1973 expressing his hope that George and Grace would be happy in their new home, and that they would both live happily ever after. Newley's joy over his parents' reconciliation was coupled with his own new-found contentment with Dareth. 'I'm so happy I'm frightened,' he wrote in his diary, 'I love my Dee Dee so much - why now at forty? What happened to all those awful years of unhappiness?'

This halcyon period was short-lived. Newley's financial state of affairs had worsened since his arrival in England. He was now earning considerably less than his cabaret fees in the States, while paying a good deal more in tax. Added to this, the bills were mounting at Lloyd Crest. Some cuts in his expenditure had to be made and made fast. It was Newley's manager who suggested that the singer should reduce Grace's (and now George's) monthly allowance. Newley agreed and then, some weeks later, stopped his father's payments completely. Kirby, who had substantial savings of his own, was unwilling to eat into his own capital and said so to his son. Newley wrote to his father on 3 March 1973, evidently hurt.

Dear Dad,

I don't quite understand your letter. I don't remember anybody asking you for anything. I think what Mr Katz and I are suggesting is that while you live in California you make a contribution to the expenses of the day to day living, in exactly the same way that you would if you were living in London, allowing of course for the different circumstances. I ceased paying you an allowance because I couldn't afford it. I was hoping I wouldn't have to, but my financial state is not what it once was.

I am glad you are both happy in the new house and that you are enjoying the TV set. Look after your health, and look after Grace,

Love Tony

Money was only part of the problem; George and Grace were not happy. The reality of living together had brought to an end any illusions they may have had about fairytale endings. Kirby was a selfish man; hadn't he always been? He paid little attention to Grace but expected her to wait on him as Nell had done. Grace found him trying and defended Tony's decision to stop his allowance. The tension between them erupted one night when Kirby knocked a glass of red wine over Grace's treasured lace tablecloth. She berated Kirby, who in turn shouted back and then left the room. The next morning he told Grace that he would be going back to London on the first available flight. After he had left the country, Gracie wrote him a number of letters, apologising repeatedly for her behaviour. She wanted him to come back to Los Angeles, to try again. The following July, George returned to their house by the beach but after only one month left California and Gracie for good. In his diary he wrote, 'I am not inclined to go back and live with Gracie. That is finished.' They did however stay in touch and a fond correspondence between them continued for several years.

Newley was not overly dismayed by the outcome. He was happy to have met his father, glad to have got to know him a little, but was not sure that he really liked him. Their reunion had resolved very few of the questions that he had been asking himself for so long. Indeed, meeting his father had underlined Tony's feelings of not belonging. He looked at Gracie and George and was bewildered as to how he could possibly be the progeny of these two people. 'Why am I so different from them?' he would ask Dee. Newley wrote a song shortly after seeing his father for the first time. Entitled *Reunion*, the lyrics expressed perhaps something of the disappointment that had accompanied that first meeting:

Since I was a kid, I dreamed about him
Always saw him standing ten feet tall
Does it matter now, my dreams about him
Were just daydreams after all?

†

Back in London on 22 March, Shelby Pandora was born. 'She is an Aries and absolutely beautiful,' Tony wrote to Ian and Judee Fraser. He also thought that she was an old soul who had been around before.

As the balmy summer came to an end, so did *GOBOD* and Tony, Dee and Shelby returned to Lloyd Crest. The show had been a nominal success, Tony supposed, but he had hardly enjoyed the run. He had been plagued by flu, endless colds and for two weeks had suffered from jaundice. He had taken no

pleasure in performing every night and had little to show for it financially. He was sorry though to have to say goodbye to Tara and Sacha.

Newley told Bricusse that he 'didn't want to do it anymore', and that he didn't want to write another stage show, let alone perform in one. Bricusse was shocked; if ever a man should have stayed in touch with Broadway it was Newley. Bricusse still had hopes that *GOBOD* might transfer and tried to talk his friend out of making any rash decision.

'Newberg, it's six years since you were on Broadway. Isn't it time you got your ass back there?' he started.

'Brickman,' Tony interrupted, 'if you were getting a million dollars for eight weeks at Caesar's Palace, would *you* get *your* ass back to Broadway?'

Bricusse thought for a moment and said, 'If I wanted to be getting a million dollars for eight weeks' work five years from now, then yes, I would, because that's what got you here in the first place.'

Newley went back to Vegas and took the money. He and Dareth returned to England the following year as Newley was to play Daniel Quilp in *Mr Quilp*, a musical version of *The Old Curiosity Shop** produced by The Reader's Digest. Irene and Louis Kamp had written the screenplay while Newley provided the songs and lyrics.

Mr Quilp reunited Newley with Gillian Lynne, who was to stage the musical numbers. Elmer Bernstein arranged and conducted the score (though Newley had Ian Fraser do some rearranging) and Michael Tuchner was to direct. The cast included Michael Hordern, Mona Washbourne, David Warner, Jill Bennett and Newley's old poker pal, David Hemmings. The score and songs could not be described as vintage Newley and only two of the ten numbers, 'Somewhere' and 'Quilp', had any sort of life outside the movie. Without the firm hand of a Bricusse or Kretzmer, Newley's songs seemed to lack structure or clear direction. Kretzmer commented that the songs that Newley wrote on his own lacked closure: 'They were always heading off with fervour and fire to a destination that they never quite reached.' As Newley had acknowledged so many years before, it required other people to give his eruptive statements shape. Newley received minimal royalties from these songs and rarely included any of them in his act.

His portrayal of Quilp, one of Dickens' most reprehensible characters, was amusing, clever and delivered with delicious panache but lacked the man's malice and his evil intent that are so evident in the novel. Michael Tuchner's direction didn't help. He failed to bring much dynamism of his own to the screen and allowed Newley to turn Quilp into a loveable rogue.

* Coincidentally, Leslie Bricusse had adapted another Dickens novel, *A Christmas Carol*, four years earlier. *Scrooge*, which starred an improbably young Albert Finney as the parsimonious anti-hero, earned Bricusse another Oscar nomination for his song 'Thank You Very Much'.

Lynne's choreography brought some life to the proceedings although she refused to let Newley and Hemmings introduce a tap dance into one of their routines. Her ruling had nothing to do with taste or Dickensian sensibility; the fact was, neither of them could dance well enough.

During filming, Newley developed an upper respiratory infection which the doctor treated with erythromycin. Newley had an allergic reaction to the drug, became terribly sick and was rushed into hospital in a critical condition. After convalescing at his rented home in Old Windsor, he returned to the film set in a seriously debilitated condition. It would be several months after he and Dee returned to Lloyd Crest before he was fully recovered.

Quilp was met with the usual mixed responses from the critics: Newley's performance was both 'a tour de force' that paid 'handsome comic dividends' as well as 'a galvanised Quasimodo on a permanent high'. His 'strong performance' was matched by his 'versatile and literate music and lyrics', but the same music was also described by one critic as 'unmemorable' and the lyrics 'tortuous'. Only Newley, it seemed, could attract such divergent reactions. As the *Guardian* critic remarked, 'Quilp is played by Anthony Newley whom some love and some hate but few regard with total indifference.'

Dee and Tony returned home and on Dee's insistence took a trip to Maui. Newley had as much difficulty doing nothing as he had when doing too much. The couple had been at the hotel for less than an hour when Newley announced that he couldn't stay there and wanted to leave that evening. Dee was not about to have her first holiday since Shelby's arrival cut short and said to Tony, 'Okay, you go, have a nice trip. I'm staying. But I think you should at least give yourself one full day of this.' Newley agreed, reluctantly, although it was clear to Dee that he simply had no idea of what to do with himself. The next day, oblivious to the tropical paradise that surrounded him, Newley wrapped himself in a blanket, put on his headphones and tried to write a song. It wasn't until Dee bought him a mask and snorkel and suggested he should go for a swim that Newley finally relaxed and began to enjoy the trip. He spent the rest of their break swimming in the ocean and collecting shells which he and Dee made into necklaces to give to the kids when they returned home.

That summer, Newley and his childhood friend Petula Clark shared the billing at the Circus Maximus at Caesar's. It was the first time they had worked together since *Don't Ever Leave Me* in 1948. 'That first rehearsal was very exciting,' Clark recalled and it seemed to her that it wasn't pure chance that they were together.

The two, both perfectionists, worked hard together. The show included a film clip from *Vice Versa* which led into a stand-up routine with Tony and Petula dressed as teenagers re-enacting a supposed earlier encounter. They

also introduced a twelve-minute medley to close the show in which each sang snippets of the other's songs. The chemistry between them was striking. Here were two very personal singers with two very different styles who connected on stage, and the sparks flew. They also paid each other the compliment of watching the other's performance from the wings. As Petula admitted, they were fascinated by each other's talent. Packed houses greeted the two throughout the two-week engagement which won acclaim from reviewers and peers alike. The *London Evening News* thought it 'crazy that nowhere in Britain can pay British artists of their quality to do a similar show. It would paralyse the West End.' Similarly, America's *Variety* suggested that the act 'could go intact to Broadway with success'.

As Newley once again settled into LA life it became apparent that his time away from Hollywood during *GOBOD* and *Quilp* had done little to help his acting or directing careers. Offers of work other than cabaret engagements and charity concerts were few and far between. Newley would talk to Ray Katz each and every day but, for all Katz's encouraging noises with regard to Newley's other talents, it seemed that he was more than keen for Newley to continue milking the cabaret circuit. Sandy Gallin, on the other hand, thought that Newley should concentrate on his writing. Although it had been Gallin who had brought Tony into the Katz/Gallin fold (and had subsequently become close friends with the singer), it was predominately Katz who looked after Newley. When Sandy left the company in 1984, amidst much rancour, in order to launch his own artists' management, Tony stayed with Ray, having been omitted from the select list of clients whom Gallin hoped to take with him. For a long time Newley felt that Gallin had rejected him. Gallin, however, presumed that Newley wanted to remain with Katz. Newley was rarely proactive in dealing with his agents or managers. He accepted their decisions, good or bad, with limited consideration. As with his finances he took no control over his career and was willing to lay the blame for missed opportunities and lost chances at the feet of others.

In 1975 Newley starred in the Canadian-made movie *It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time*: a title that comprehensively mirrored Newley's feelings once the film had been released. Produced by Quadrant Films, written and directed by John Trent, this movie was of such execrable quality that the able talents of Stefanie Powers, Isaac Hayes, Lloyd Bochner and a young John Candy could in no way raise its standard to anything beyond 'crap', as Newley later described it. Newley's own performance was unimpressive; a mass of well-worn mannerisms and habits, raised eyebrows and silly voices.

During the spring of that year, Newley and Bricusse collaborated on the songs for a new TV adaptation of *Peter Pan* that was to star Danny Kaye as Captain Hook and Mia Farrow as Peter. Gary Smith and Dwight Hemion

produced the show to mark Hallmark Cards' seventy-fifth anniversary and, just as David Wolper had for *Willy Wonka*, commissioned the writers to provide the score. Encouraged by the certainty of a cheque, and the chance to work with their friends Danny and Mia, Newley and Bricusse agreed to pen the melodies and lyrics. Like *Willy Wonka*, this collaboration worked at long distance, with Newberg in LA and Brickman in France. Once the score was complete, the writers met with Ian Fraser in London to discuss the arrangements and to record the demos. The score had come easily: twenty songs in as many days, most of them filled with childlike whimsy and humour. Bricusse especially revelled in the creation of Hook's songs for Danny Kaye. As a child he had watched Kaye's movies over and over and knew by heart just about every song Danny Kaye had sung. Kaye's wife, Sylvia Fine, was the lyricist for many of those songs and Bricusse felt that he knew exactly the style that she had written in. 'Hook's songs just flew off the pen,' Brickman recalled and Kaye, so often an intolerant, demanding and temperamental actor, was happy. Kaye was a neighbour of both Newley and Bricusse, both of whom were regular guests at Kaye's house where he specialised in cooking Chinese food in his very own Chinese kitchen. Somewhat ungenerously, Newley at times couldn't help feeling that they were there to watch and applaud Kaye's cooking skills.

The show, filmed in England, was reasonably successful, if somewhat stunted by the predictability of Michael Kidd's direction. Kaye managed to shine and even Farrow with her limited vocal talents brought Peter's songs to life. The score was good, not great perhaps, but Bricusse hoped that *Peter Pan* would make Newley realise that they should go on writing together. Tony wasn't convinced.

On 14 December 1975, Hollywood agent Franklin R Levy produced a gala for the Beverly Hills Hadassah. *It's A Musical World* was presented at the Hollywood Palladium and celebrated the *The Music and Lyrics of Leslie Bricusse and Anthony Newley*. Brickman and Newberg were thrilled to have their catalogue of songs given an outing in Los Angeles and although they were not involved in any part of the production, Levy did ask the writers if they might help furnish the benefit with a number of stars. Brickman and Newberg made some phone calls, as a result of which Burt Bacharach, Tony Bennett, Richard Chamberlain, Gene Kelly and Henry Mancini were joined by Eydie Gorme, Steve Lawrence, Roger Moore, David Niven, Juliet Prowse, Lou Rawls, Peter Sellers, Jean Stapleton, Sammy Davis Jr and Florence Henderson. The show, under the musical direction of Ian Fraser, opened with 'It's A Musical World', after which the emcee announced, 'Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome Mr Bricusse and Mr Newley.' The applause was thunderous as two little boys, Adam Bricusse and Sacha Newley, walked out onto the stage.

STOP THE WORLD

It was a show that producers dream about; a show that Brickman and Newberg would never forget. And a show that unwittingly celebrated the end of their collaborative output. Together, Bricusse and Newley would write just one more song.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE JOKER

BETWEEN 1975 AND 1980, Newley played the cabaret circuit to the exclusion of all else. He continued to write songs – lots of them – but none had any success or audience outside of his own shows. The opportunities to record albums were becoming infrequent too. He had never really established himself in America as a recording artist and therefore was unable to capture the record-buying public. The sales of his albums from the early seventies could not begin to compete with those of Davis or Sinatra. Newley's lyrics were, on occasion, so personal as to be utterly bewildering to the listener. He wrote of naked centrefold models, of affairs with younger girls and of his desire to taste pop star fame once more as he had in the fifties:

There was a time when time was young the children knew my song
And once you've tasted their delight you don't forget it overnight
And you long to have that special love again.

He wrote about the dangers of drug-taking, of his relationship with Streisand and, with an eye on his own fractured childhood and the questionable quality of his parenting skills, professed that:

The children of the world
Are doomed
Before they reach a school
By families who are unprepared
And careless
As long as procreation
Is a paradise for fools
The world will be the victim
Of its parents.

He wrote about his friend E B arranging a secret tryst with Dareth, 'So he asked you to lunch did he?' There were songs for Shelby, Dee, Sandy Gallin and songwriter Howie Greenfield. In 'The Storyteller' he even sang about his lousy record sales:

My songs are rarely on the radio
They call them middle of the road

Which means, although it sounds absurd
That you can hear the words
I sing for all the people sad to say
Who don't buy records anyway
Now do you wonder why I bitch
I know I won't get rich.

Newley's songs represented events, moments, thoughts, wishes, regrets in his life, all of them deeply personal, all of them fascinatingly enigmatic. Alan King thought that 'Newley wrote prose', and the comic was fascinated by the way that Tony would 'undress' in front of the audience. Ian Fraser thought that although some of his songs were very involved, you accepted them because he was an artiste: 'He had about him what few have. It's like a Garland, a Marlene, a Garbo. He was a male diva.'

'The Man That Makes You Laugh', written for the First Comedy Awards, said a good deal more about Newley perhaps than the comics for whom he was writing. Alan King, the founder of the awards, had requested a dramatic piece – not a comic song – that would tell the story of the stand-up comedian. The guy who was out there alone. Newley spoke from the heart:

Could the love that you crave be waiting in some woman's heart
Or must you spend these endless nights alone among the crowd
Bowling for the laughter in the dark
Knowing that when the audience go home you'll be all alone.

And his dislike of performing and fear of connecting with an audience is illustrated in the remarkable line:

The monster with the thousand eyes is shouting to be fed
Get your head together for the second show

As a coveted star, there were television appearances aplenty for Newley to supplement his cabaret income. He regularly teamed up with Cher on *The Sonny and Cher Show* to perform comic sketches; he was one of the wittier stars on *Hollywood Squares* and he and Dareth took part in *Tattletales*. He batted punchlines with Steve Allen and co-hosted *The Mike Douglas Show*. On his own, Newley presented a host of variety programmes including the *Petula Clark Story* and he was an everyday presence on the chat show sofas of Merv Griffin, Dinah Shore, John Davidson, Toni Tenille, Joan Rivers and Johnny Carson.

Newley's behaviour on such shows was at times extraordinary. With male interviewers he often seemed ill at ease, repeatedly picking at his nails or playing with his coffee mug and although he clearly had a rapport with hosts

such as Bob Newhart and Carson, he would on occasion make little effort to entertain the studio audience. He would also say whatever came into his head, with scant regard for the host or the viewer. 'I'm only here because they pay me \$380,' he began one interview, and continued, 'I've just come from pleasuring my lady,' whom he referred to as 'the last Mrs Newley'. When Newhart interviewed him on the *Tonight Show*, a conversation about their experience of working together almost ground to a halt after Newley described at some length just how badly their joint show had fared in Cleveland. He then went on to say how much he hated performing and that he only did it for the money: 'I'm singing for me.'

After the show, Newhart chided his friend gently. 'Tony, you may feel that way but don't say it publicly. People...they want to think you're really enjoying yourself out there, that's one of the reasons they show up.' Dareth was often embarrassed by Newley's lack of discretion: 'He had no qualms about saying anything,' she remembered. 'Probably, he just didn't care - "this is what I am, this is what I think". One time he went on the Carson show and all he talked about was me catching a tuna, how boring is that for everybody?' (Newley had good reason to be proud though, as the fish had weighed in at 173lb.) Many of Newley's friends commented on his habit of shocking an audience in a way that was often self-destructive. Dee thought that Tony was subconsciously sabotaging his career: 'I think a lot of people saw him on TV and thought, "What an awful person. Why should we go to the movies, buy a ticket to Las Vegas or go out of our way to see this person who doesn't even like what he is doing or care if we are there?"' However, when Tony appeared on Joan Rivers' show (a lady whom he adored), he reverted to being the charismatic, English gentleman. As in his personal life, Tony was more comfortable with women.

On the road, Newley appeared with Victor Borge, Shecky Greene, Jerry Van Dyke, Rich Little, Henry Mancini, Bernadette Peters, Joan Rivers, Bob Newhart and Dionne Warwick. He and Marvin Hamlisch wrote an opener for their show together and there were numerous engagements with Alan King and Juliet Prowse. King had known Newley since the late 1950s when the two had met at a party in London and they had socialised often during Tony's stay in New York. King considered Newley way above the audience at Caesar's: he was 'too good for the room'. And the two were great friends. 'Tony was one of the most remarkable men; he was a force. Listening to Tony gave me a lift. I felt theatrical.' King also said that 'Newley had that wonderful streak of insanity and no compromise. Now that's a failing in most people but when you had that kind of talent, it added to it. Artistically he was a free spirit: Tony did things that Tony wanted to do.' However, doing what he wanted to do and saying what he wanted to say occasionally landed Tony in hot water. At

Caesar's in 1975 he and King were sharing the bill. At the end of his own performance and before introducing King, Tony thanked the audience and then casually threw in the line: 'And thank you to the Mafia for the room hire.' The comment was duly noted by one of the many suits and immediately relayed along the corridors of the hotel. At the end of King's set and as he and Newley were taking their curtain calls, King gestured for the audience to stop clapping and announced that his colleague had something to say. 'Shut up, Alan,' Newley interrupted, 'I can do this myself.' He continued somewhat ashen-faced: 'Ladies and Gentlemen. Some of you may recall a remark I made earlier about room hire. I should like to take this opportunity to apologise for such a foolish comment and reassure all patrons that there is absolutely no truth in the remark whatsoever.' Newley may have resented the order from on high but he knew when to backtrack.

Alan King compared him to Fred Astaire: 'Astaire danced with some of the most beautiful women on screen but you never look at them. Tony had that. When Tony was on stage there was nobody else up there.' Newley revered King and sought out the society of other Jewish comics. He felt comfortable in their company and found that their take on life complemented his own. King saw that Newley had the greatest sense of humour – that of the ironist. 'He saw all the bullshit, not unlike Lenny Bruce. Newley stuck it right in your face.' Newhart admitted that he and his colleagues probably held Newley in higher esteem than did the general public.

Newley had a particularly successful relationship with Burt Bacharach, who thought him a 'magical' performer who had an 'openness' and was not at all jaded. The two performed together for several years and often talked of collaborating as writers. However, sharing a joint or discussing women tended to get in the way of ever penning a lyric or note. They had fun on stage too. On a visit to Miami, Bacharach asked Newley about Gracie and commented on the fact that the seventy-five-year-old rolled 'a helluva joint'. Newley responded that his mother was always grabbing the joint as it went around and that to his dismay she'd learnt to roll a good one just as he'd given up using them. At that moment a guy in the audience tossed a 'funny cigarette', as Newley called them, onto the stage. Newley and Bacharach looked at it, looked at each other, then Newley picked it up, split it in half and the two performers began to smoke the marijuana in front of an audience that just happened to include a party of off-duty Miami police officers. The repartee that continued for some ten minutes as various other drugs landed on the stage was finally brought to an end when Jack French, Newley's MD, grabbed a stage broom and literally brushed Newley and the offending joints into the wings. (Newley and Ian Fraser had a similar experience, having smoked pot before one of their shows at Caesar's. Fraser recalled, 'Tony gave the dirtiest show he ever did and I thought the band had moved next door. Never again.')

Newley would often feel sick with nerves as a performance approached, convinced that he would be unable to remember all the lyrics (he'd been known to have cue cards for 'La La La'), and his mistrust of the audience had grown stronger over the years. The notes he made for himself on the back of the running order read like a battle plan : 'You sing for *you* – don't look out front. Energy – use the space. Vulnerability – don't be afraid of it. Use the mic close to mouth. Diction and attack!' Before walking onto the stage he would ask God to 'let me kill 'em', and then looking out across the sea of bobbing heads would whisper, 'Who are you to judge me?' Newley may not have liked to look at his audience but he was rarely at a loss for words when heckled by other artists watching the show and soon learned to cover up any memory lapse with a funny line or a wry smile.

Fraser remembered an evening when Tony had had too many sherries before the show:

He did this routine in the act about Tom Jones, saying, 'It's all fake, just an old army sock stuffed down his pants. If it isn't a fake I think I'll kill myself,' and after this bit, somebody let him know that Tom was in the house. Newley introduced the singer and then noticed that Buddy Hackett was in as well. Hackett jumped up and shouted, 'Newley! I've seen your show but I haven't seen your ass.' Newley dropped his pants and mooned him, put them back on and turned around to the mic and said, 'Is there anything I can do for you, Tom?'

Newley sang 'The Man Who Makes You Laugh' at a Bob Newhart tribute and was surprised when Dick Martin stood up and said, 'Mr Newley, sir. If it is your intention to sing any more of these love songs, and I must say, you do them beautifully, I suggest that you do up your fly.' Newley raised his famous eyebrows and peered into the gloom. 'Do you mean to say all you bastards out there have let me sing this wonderful song without telling me that my fly was open?' After five minutes of schtick Newley continued with his next number. Newhart doubted that Tony really feared his audience as he handled those kind of situations so well. As in so many areas of his life, what Newley professed to feel about something was not always borne out by his actions.

Like many of the cabaret entertainers, Tony's act remained much the same throughout his career. It was built around the Newley/Bricusse hit songs from the '60s with his own compositions added to the mix. 'The Candy Man' was a favourite, during which Newley would toss sweets into the audience. Performing the number at the Miss World Beauty Pageant in London, Newley aimed the wrapped candies at the newspaper critics he'd recognised and commented that it was probably the best meal they'd had all day. The critics returned fire and pelted the singer with the toffee missiles. Newley gave as

good as he got without dropping a single line of the song. There was also a Broadway medley, arranged by Fraser, made up of songs that Newley wished he had written. Newley fought against his own material becoming stale, both for himself and the audiences, by updating his own standards. Ian Fraser alone did four versions of 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' for him and 'Who Can I Turn To?' (somewhat improbably) acquired a disco beat and a three-minute comedy dance routine. The act was delivered with Newley's unforgettable style and theatrical flair tinged with a self-deprecation that was both funny and endearing. But beneath the surface was a bitterness that would at times raise its ugly head. For a number of shows he introduced himself thus:

Good evening, sweet friends: this evening I shall be singing you songs composed mostly by my dear self and my colleague Leslie Bricusse. I used to sing songs by other people but they never sang any of mine, so screw them, tonight Newley sings Newley.

Newley's physical and vocal mannerisms had always been eccentric. The distorted vowels, the balletic hand gestures and pigeon-toed, broken puppet posture had for many years been an easy target for impersonators. Tony didn't mind – he enjoyed the attention – although he was genuinely shocked when he first saw himself parodied on stage. Some of Newley's movements came as a result of his own, highly individual, singing technique, as one entry in his diary revealed: 'Discovered in last couple of shows, new method of pushing forward pelvis to conserve more air and place less strain on the throat. Helps immensely!'

As the years passed, the expressive but exaggerated nature of his performance became more and more accented, prompting Ian Fraser to joke that if Anthony Newley entered an Anthony Newley impersonation contest, he would come in third. (David Bowie, who confessed to being heavily influenced by the Newley persona, may well have come second.) Newley later said that he had been unaware of his vocal contortions at that time and was saddened that none of his friends had ever said anything to him about it. Whether he would have listened to their comments is doubtful. For all that, his voice had developed a richness and depth that he savoured. His was now a full-throttled baritone that retained the top notes that came so easily. He never lost the break in his voice that Anna Quayle had found so appealing but now he had so many other colours to choose from. Above all, he was an intelligent and sensitive musician who displayed a subtlety of phrasing and an innate understanding of musical styles. Newley was a balladeer, a jazz singer, a musical comedian and at times he verged on the operatic. He could sing swing, bebop and disco with equal aplomb. He would own a song rather than just perform it. Bob Newhart once introduced him thus: 'Tony has never

tried to hide the fact that his mother and father were not married. But boy! The little bastard can sure sing, can't he?

His eccentricities were not confined to the stage. Newley insisted on a stretch limousine at every venue to ferry him (and him alone) to and from the theatre or casino. Should an ordinary car be provided, the singer would rage, call Ray Katz and threaten to pull out of the concert. On Long Island, Newley was being driven to the Westbury Music Fair by his dresser and road manager, Billy Bones, when their rented limo ran out of fuel. Bones started to thumb for a lift as Newley, tuxedo draped over his arm, leant against the car. Eventually a beat up Volkswagon pulled up but Newley refused to get in, telling Bones to wait until something better came along. Bones stuck out his arm but nobody stopped until half an hour later, when the little Volkswagon returned and the English driver once again offered them a lift which Newley, swallowing his pride, accepted.

Newley's sleeping habits were also curious. He and Dareth had separate rooms since the slightest noise would disturb him. His reason for leaving her each night was, he said, due to a fear of suffocating anything he slept with, having rolled on a pet chick he had had as a little boy. This bizarre excuse Dareth considered 'the craziest crock of shit' she had ever heard in her life.

Dorothy Ohman, Newley's last secretary, was instructed to book hotel rooms away from motors, elevators, and air conditioning units as Newley had been known to drag a mattress into the bathroom and sleep in the tub to escape the 'hum' that he could hear in the bedroom. Billy Bones would be sent on ahead to find a room without a 'hum'. The only problem with this was that Bones couldn't hear the 'hums' that were so distressing to his boss. 'We must have gone through a dozen rooms at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco,' Bones recalled. 'I called Ma and said, "There's something weird about this guy, he's hearing hums and I don't know what he's talking about."' Newley explained that if Bill were to put his ear to the wall, he too would hear the hum. It was true, there was a low vibration, 'about 30 hertz,' gauged Bones, who realised that it was a real problem for Newley that had to be addressed wherever they stayed. Accompanying the Bell Captain around an hotel, Bones would seek out a 'hum-free' room: 'I would end up finding him a little tiny room that didn't have a "hum" in it and they would look at me like I was crazy and ask, "Are you sure he wants this?" I was a Humbuster.' Tony had T-shirts made up for Bones and Sacha (who occasionally accompanied his father on tour) with Humbuster written on them, so that people would take them seriously!

Herman Raucher and his wife, MK, once took Tony to their favourite restaurant in Connecticut where they were known, having been regular customers for several years. The owners, excited to have Tony Newley eating in their

restaurant, brought the guest book over and asked him to write something in it. Newley instantly put pen to paper and wrote, 'Don't order the stuffed sole.'

Embarrassed, Herman asked, 'Why did you do that?'

'The stuffed sole wasn't very good,' Newley replied simply.

The Rauchers never went back. He did it for a laugh, the Rauchers knew, and it was funny, if inappropriate and thoughtless. 'He was not a malicious man and he would never say anything to hurt,' Herman maintained nevertheless, 'but if something was funny he couldn't resist it. It got said.'

Newley was a one-off. His audiences kept coming to his shows, his fees kept rising and in 1977 his fellow entertainers voted him Male Musical Star of the Year in the sixth Annual Las Vegas Awards Ceremony. This was an honour that touched Newley. It was one thing to win an award for a song, but to have one's work recognised and lauded openly by one's peers was quite another. Newley felt at last that he had been accepted.

At Lloyd Crest too Newley was content. He doted on his daughter, fitting 'Shelby Time' into each day he was at home and he seemed settled with Dareth. Dee looked after Tony and made a point of travelling with him as much as she could, ensuring that they were not apart for more than two weeks at a time. They socialised, but on a much smaller scale than when Tony was with Joan, and they hoped to have another child, although this was beginning to look less and less likely.

In 1976 Tara and Sacha came to live at Lloyd Crest. Joan had moved back to Los Angeles with Ron Kass a year earlier and as a result Newley had seen much more of his two older children. Tara liked Dareth and saw her as an ideal mum, a woman who stayed at home to care for her child. At that time Tara was resentful of Joan's desire to work and the fact that she saw more of her nanny than she did of her mother. So naturally the familial bliss that her father's home offered each weekend was what Tara wanted most. She and Sacha had stayed at Lloyd Crest, 'the magic home', for a month while their mother was away on location. When Joan returned they moved back to the Kass home but were clearly unhappy. 'We didn't want to move back,' Tara recounted. 'We were having such a good time and living a lovely life.' For the next few weeks, the siblings moped around much to their mother's irritation, which heightened as the days passed. At last Joan could stand it no longer and tore into the sullen girl lounging across from her at the kitchen table. 'If you're going to sit around being miserable,' she screamed, 'why don't you go and live with your father and that stewardess!' The thirteen-year-old stormed out of the house, walked to Coldwater Park where she begged a dime and rang her father to pick her up. Sacha followed his sister a few days later.

Tony was thrilled to have all his children around him but it was a sea change for Dareth who would have to tend to their every need. She explained to Tara and Sacha that in reality their father would be away for much of the

year, but the children insisted that Lloyd Crest was where they wanted to be. Joan was distraught but resigned herself to seeing Tara and Sacha as and when she could. Tony revelled in the time he spent with his children. He lost himself in their childish world, catching butterflies and fighting dragons, and nothing was denied them. He ran their favourite Disney movies on his own 16mm cinema projector, he spent hours reading with them and their birthday parties were splendid affairs. During the celebrations for Shelby's sixth birthday, Bunny Pappas commented, 'What do you do for a child after you have given her this? Do you buy her Puerto Rico? What *do* you do?'

Christmas was also a special time for Newley. Although he stated on various chat shows that he thought it wrong to pass on to his children the myths and make-believe of one's own childhood, with typical contrariness he went to extraordinary lengths to make Christmas as magical an experience as possible. Each Christmas Eve he and Dareth would throw a party that was specifically designed for the children of all their friends. Newley took great pleasure in organising parties and would personally choose the presents for the thirty or so children who were invited. During the party, Newley would make his excuses and leave, supposedly to have his afternoon sleep. He would then rush to his dressing room, apply greasepaint and whiskers and don a Father Christmas outfit, hired from one of Beverly Hills' leading costumiers. He left the house without being seen and then, bells and sack in hand, would 'Ho, ho, ho' his way into the house to the utter delight of the children. John Standing remembered Santa's arrival as 'a fantastic charade. This ancient Father Christmas would come in complete with Hollywood makeup and real beard. He did it stunningly well and the kids would fall for it every single year. That sort of thing he did touchingly well.' Wherever the family spent the holiday, even in Vegas, Newley always made sure that Father Christmas paid a visit. When Shelby was seven the magic was broken. As she kissed Santa she suddenly recognised his nose. After he had left, she ran to her father's room to find him removing his make-up. Tony hugged her close and whispered, 'Are you disappointed?'

Shelby smiled and said, 'No.'

After a year Tony decided that Lloyd Crest was too small to accommodate his family and, driven by the urge to find a home that was more in keeping with his status as a millionaire entertainer, began looking for a larger house. He had the space and permission to develop Lloyd Crest, but instead, foolishly he put the home where he had been most happy on the market.

426 Bristol Avenue was the old Joan Crawford estate in Brentwood, a vast, crumbling palace set in several acres, with an Olympic-sized pool and its own movie house. Newley employed an architect to draw up the plans for what would be a significant and costly restoration of the \$1,000,000 house. He sold Lloyd Crest for little more than he had bought it and rented a Bel

Air mansion in Stone Canyon Blvd for a year while the work was carried out on Bristol Avenue. The Orange House, as they called their temporary home, 'had beautiful gardens,' Dareth recalled, 'we loved living there'. Initially, Dareth had been less than keen to move and she was not as impressed by their new home-to-be as Tony, but he remained determined. Newley's expenditure matched his earnings as the cost of redecorating No 426 escalated.

In 1978, Sammy Davis Jr starred in a lavish revival of *Stop the World - I Want to Get Off*. Since first seeing the show in London, Davis had always wanted to play Littlechap and in every way he was the natural successor to Newley. Ian Fraser rearranged the score while Newberg and Brickman updated and rewrote the book to suit Sammy's needs and American tastes (so skilled was their reworking that one critic advised his readers that 'American hands have clearly been at work'.) They also delivered a new song for the first act: 'Life is a Woman' was a tender, reflective ballad, more contemplative than the rest of the original score. Its melodic line and harmonic structure demonstrated how accomplished a composer Newley had become and just how good he could be when working with Bricusse. It was vintage Bricusse/Newley and it brought their eighteen-year-old collaboration to its conclusion.

What should have been a joyful reunion of talented friends ended in an unpleasant fallout between Fraser, Newley, Bricusse and Sammy and his MD, George Rhodes. Rhodes had been Davis's musical director since the late forties and though a talented pianist and stylish arranger he was not admired by Bricusse. Newberg and Brickman had asked Ian Fraser to be musical supervisor but Sammy insisted that George be the show's conductor. Rhodes had had hardly any experience of conducting stage musicals; he was a band director and nothing more. Fraser told Sammy that he was worried about Rhodes's involvement from the start but Sammy, with a certain amount of persuasion from George's wife Shirley, refused to change his mind. Fraser rehearsed the show and conducted the initial read-through with the orchestra at the Fox Theatre in San Diego, where the show was to open. Rhodes took over the next day for the final dress rehearsals but by lunchtime had failed to get as far as the end of the first act. Bricusse saw that Sammy was going to fail in the show unless something was done to address the problem of Rhodes there and then. He discussed with Newley the possibility of Fraser taking over and then approached Fraser himself.

Fraser agreed to replace Rhodes on the condition that he would conduct the show not just for the two weeks in San Diego but for the entire six-week run in Los Angeles so that Rhodes would have time to see everything he did and 'learn'. Bricusse agreed and presented Sammy with the plan of action that he assured the reluctant performer would be to everyone's benefit. Fraser stood in immediately and went on to conduct the cast album allowing Rhodes to direct only a few numbers.

'Sammy interpreted it as the whites against the blacks,' Fraser recollected. 'He was pleasant but there was no warmth and I had been a friend of his for years.'

Davis's relations with Bricusse and Newley also cooled: 'When Ian was brought in, everybody agreed but it caused a major fall-out with me and Sammy,' Bricusse recalled. 'Newley wasn't even around. When we were fixing and changing things in San Diego, there was no Newley. It was just me and Sammy.'

When the show played Los Angeles, Newley attended the opening night at the Shubert and he, Bricusse and Sammy were civil with each other but there was yet another storm brewing around Fraser. Rhodes was due to come in to the show during the last two weeks of the Los Angeles run and then take over for the Chicago and New York seasons, but Hillard Elkins, the show's producer, approached Fraser some weeks earlier. He told him that Rhodes would be conducting the next evening's performance. Fraser protested, 'No. The arrangement was that I conduct throughout the LA run.'

Elkins persisted, 'We want George to have a go now.'

'No. This is my town and I will get the show through here and take you into the next venue,' Fraser said, repressing his anger.

'Sammy insists,' Elkins replied, bringing the discussion to a close.

The conductor flipped. 'Fine! If you want George tomorrow night then that's it, it's over.' Fraser left the theatre and Rhodes picked up the baton a night early.

The rift between Sammy, Bricusse and Newley eventually healed although Tony and Sammy stopped playing together. No more the unannounced visits to his old home on Summit Drive, the all-night chats and the poker games. The two would refer to each other as friends but in truth they saw little of each other over the following years. The show, however, was a sensational success and gave Davis's career a much needed boost. 'He was fabulous,' Bricusse said, 'although he wasn't Newley.'

Bristol Avenue was finished in 1979 at a cost of nearly \$2 million. The decor was singularly bizarre – 'a colour nightmare,' Bricusse remembered. A prawn-cocktail-pink hall led to a bubble-gum-pink and purple living room which itself led to a ballroom, now the dining room, which was painted yellow with black columns and boasted a zebra skin carpet. Potted ferns were liberally scattered around the room. Newley loved it.

Just before the Newley *ménage* installed themselves in their new home, Dee discovered she was pregnant. Delighted, she immediately told Tony, who to her dismay failed to respond to her joy. There was, she recalled, 'no smile, no delight. His face just fell.'

Tony leaned across the table and took her hand. 'This would be a really bad time to have a baby,' he said quietly.

Dee couldn't believe her ears and responded, 'Tony, for five years you have asked me to have another child and for five years it hasn't happened. Finally it has happened.'

'It doesn't work now,' Tony muttered. 'I'm too old, I'm just too old.'

Dee insisted that what was done was done but Tony prevailed on her to arrange an appointment with her gynaecologist, Dr Bruce Stern. He listened to Dee's explanation that Tony wanted her to terminate the pregnancy against her own wishes, and aware of her own Catholic faith and upbringing comforted her by saying that he was unwilling to proceed with such an operation.

'I can't, I can't have an abortion.' Dareth sobbed and, looking at Tony, stated, 'If this is something you don't want to do, then this is the end of our relationship. I am going to have this baby.'

Later Tony began to explain to Dee that he was in financial trouble, that the Crawford house had cost much more than he had imagined and that he would have to earn hundreds of thousands of dollars simply to cover the mortgage. This came as a shock to Dareth; she knew nothing of their finances since Tony had always kept her in the dark. Tony was genuinely concerned about being able to afford to feed another mouth. Dee blanched: how could a man who earned \$75,000 a week have financial problems? Dee refused to be persuaded. 'I'm going to have this baby and if that means finding somewhere to live and living on my own then that's what I'm going to do.'

There was a moment's silence. 'No. That's not what you are going to do,' Tony said. 'We're going to get married and we are going to get through this together.'

In October 1979 Tony Newley and Dareth Rich, witnessed by their good friends David and Micheline Swift and Tony's manager Ray Katz, were married by a judge in downtown Los Angeles. At the small reception, Bricusse offended the bride by greeting her as 'Mrs Newley Rich'.

On the very first night that they moved into Bristol Avenue, Dareth walked into Tony's bedroom and announced that she didn't feel that she was going to be able to live there: 'We need to get out of here.' She sounded panicked: 'There is something very wrong with this house. I don't like it here.' Newley hit the roof. 'You've got to be kidding! Now?' he gasped. 'Look. We have put so much into it and we're not even finished yet, it would be absolutely stupid to sell it now.'

Dareth agreed but needed to know that if things didn't work out in the house, Tony would be willing to sell. He replied that if in one year she still didn't like it, then yes, he would look for another home.

It was a miserable year. There were cold spots in the house on Bristol Avenue that refused to warm up and Newley could not bring himself to go into the cellar. Noises disturbed the family and possessions and ornaments were moved, although everyone denied touching them. Other things began

to disappear completely and it wasn't until several paintings, bicycles, a piano and Boomer the dog had gone missing that Tony discovered the married couple whom he had hired as housekeeper and gardener were systematically stealing anything they could get their hands on. To compound all this Tony and Sacha's holiday together in Alaska was cut short by the death of George Kirby in London.

More disturbing was the change, barely noticeable at first, amongst the occupants. Sacha, once a gregarious child, now seemed withdrawn and complained of not being happy when in his room. Tara, who rarely left the confines of her own bedroom, had become interested in punk rock and adopted the uniform of dyed hair and thick black kohl pasted around her eyes. Newley brought in a hairdresser to return her hair to its original colour. Arguments became a daily event until Dareth and Tara eventually stopped speaking to each other altogether. Dareth and Tony's relationship suffered too. It had not been the same since leaving Lloyd Crest, Dareth thought. They hadn't been in the Bel Air home long enough to settle and she and Tony had lost their privacy now that they had staff to help with the children. 'We no longer had a small intimate family anymore,' Dee mused. 'Suddenly, we had these big houses and three children and not just the baby. There were seven years difference between Shelby and Sacha and everybody was going in a different direction so it took a lot to get everybody to the schools, to get things done.' Tony would return from his work and sit down with the family and try to sort things out, but as soon as he left, the fragile peace degenerated once more into an unpleasant and unhappy atmosphere. 'Everything bad happened in that house,' Dareth later said.

When Christopher Tyler was born on 9 April 1980, Tony took his son in his arms and bathed him. Somehow this birth had affected him more than the others and he would go on to describe it as one of the most moving experiences of his life. Tony's initial euphoria, however, vanished quickly. He paid fleeting and infrequent visits to the hospital during which he would dutifully pick up the baby, kiss Dee and then leave.

'I felt his coldness, I felt him pull back from us and I didn't know why,' Dee recalled. She was also aware that Tony was occasionally seeing other women when on tour. 'I thought that he was rooted and happy until I found out that he was playing around,' she said, 'but I turned my back on it for a long time, didn't say anything, didn't look for trouble and it always blew over.'

Things were changing on the work front as well. Herbert Kretzmer and Newley had spent nearly ten weeks in the spring, in London and Los Angeles, funded by Bernard Delfont, working on a musical treatment of *Around the World in 80 Days* for which they had high hopes. The two writers had already

made a proposition to Peter Hall: if they got it right, and if Delfont paid for the show, would Hall be prepared to put it on at the National Theatre? Hall had burst out laughing at the audacity of Newley's approach and agreed in principle to direct it as long as it came up to scratch. The 'high humour' that the writers felt when they started the project was short-lived. Despite the fun of writing the musical, Kretzmer had been bothered all along by a fundamental doubt that he didn't articulate until the very last day of his stay in California, when he turned to Newley and said, 'We haven't got a musical.'

Tony recoiled as if in pain and said, 'Oh God! The steel band is cutting into my temple again. Why not?'

Kretzmer rejoined, 'Because we have a musical here that is all incident and no plot. Nothing happens to anyone in this fucking musical. The whole point about Phileas Fogg is that he is a bore and a stickler who never feels anything. Mike Todd's movie is unwatchable. Even Cole Porter and Orson Welles' 1946 Broadway version was a turkey. It's just a bad idea. Let's drop it.' Newley said nothing. He knew Kretzmer was right.

Something else had bemused Kretzmer during his sojourn in California and that was Newley's house. It was opulent and sumptuous and out of synch with what he knew about his friend: 'Tony was suddenly trying to live the big Brentwood life. There were nannies and chauffeurs and security systems and God knows what.' Kretzmer thought that buying the Crawford estate was indicative of the lack of direction Tony experienced at that time and concluded that it was a 'terribly wrong idea to live in that house'.

Newley's disappointment at the sudden demise of the *80 Days* project was increased by the news that his two-year-old contract with the Desert Inn had not been renewed. Almost overnight, Las Vegas had changed. The Inland Revenue and FBI had hounded the Mafia out of town and the Strip was now being run by accountants. Mexico's economic crisis had deprived Vegas of a third of its business and American interest rates were soaring. The hotels could no longer justify the million dollar contracts that had been so freely handed out during the seventies. Tastes were changing too. Full-scale productions were replacing the lounge acts, and the Country and Western rhinestone had usurped the black tie. Dolly and Kenny were in, Newley and his ilk were out. Only a few individual performers such as Sinatra, Sammy, Liza, Cosby, and Lena Horne managed to weather the storm and even they found the going tough. Three years after he had stood triumphant at the top of the heap, Newley lost Vegas and with it more than half his income.

One year to the day after their arrival at Bristol Avenue, Dareth called her friend and real estate agent Micheline Swift and asked her to find them another home, a house that no-one else had lived in – 'a house,' Dareth pleaded, 'that hasn't got this feeling.' But it would be another twelve months before they

could leave the Crawford estate, twelve months that brought Newley even more sadness. Sacha had decided to return to England where Joan was now based – partly to reconcile his differences with his mother but also at his own request to attend a boarding school. Tara too had resolved to follow her brother. Newley was desolate. He couldn't imagine his life without his children around him. The 'promising '70s' had come and gone, and with them seemingly, so had his wealth, success and personal happiness. He wondered what the '80s had in store for him.

Bristol Avenue was sold, at a loss, to a couple from Texas who had two children. They invited Dareth to join them and fifteen psychics for a spiritual cleansing of the house. The meeting was held one cold, blustery evening and as each participant arrived they were anointed with oil which was also placed around the windows and doors. As the group moved into the house the lights fused. A circle of candles was lit in the dining room and everyone present gathered round to begin the rite. Within minutes some of the psychics began to describe images, ghosts of people that they could see. A number of them said that there was a woman sitting on the couch in the living room, another lady in a 1940s dress and an icy aura occupied the grey room while a former housekeeper was also apparent. All were in agreement that the cellar which Newley had avoided was the worst place in the house. It was positioned directly under Sacha's bedroom and one psychic professed it to be one of the portals of the underworld. In all, the psychics claimed there were twenty-three spirits present in the house.

Dee did not know what to make of the experience. But she did truly believe that there was something in that house that had made her family deeply unhappy and uncomfortable. The contentment and peace that they had once enjoyed had gone, and they would never get it back.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SHOWBIZ IS MY LIFE

NEWLEY HAD FELT FOR MANY YEARS an affinity with Charles Chaplin. In the late seventies he began to think about writing a musical based on Chaplin's entire life. The show could be a vehicle for Newley's return to the legitimate stage in a role that few would doubt his appropriateness to play. The similarities between the two were striking: Chaplin was born into abject poverty in London; he was parentless from an early age due to his father's death and his mother's committal into an asylum; he took to the stage as a child and made his way to America where he found fame and considerable fortune but never applied for citizenship; lacking a formal education, as a young man he would spend hours reading or mining his dictionary for new words; he was a notorious womaniser who had a known preference for young girls ('the most beautiful form of human life – the very young girl just starting to bloom') and who, on two occasions, was obliged to marry his sixteen-year-old lovers, having supposedly made them pregnant. Chaplin, like Newley after him, was an actor, writer, musician, director and film-maker who wrote his own material for his own talents. He was also a perfectionist who disregarded budgets and schedules in order to achieve what he wanted artistically. His work, the quality of which varied enormously, was ultimately defined by his continual fascination and exploration of the plight of the little man. Chaplin's Tramp and Newley's Littlechap were cut with the same die.

Newley began to look for a collaborator and in 1979 he and Burt Bacharach announced their intention to write a new musical called *Chaplin*. However, the two failed to progress any further than the title and Newley continued, sporadically, to work alone. In 1982 he was introduced to Stanley Ralph Ross who shared his passion for Chaplin. Ross was a man of many talents. As an actor he had appeared in thirty television films and eight feature films, while as a script writer he had worked on *Batman*, *The Monkees*, *Banacek*, *Colombo* and *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* He had also had a number of books and over 100 songs published. He and Newley agreed to work together as co-lyricists, composers and writers, and Ross accompanied the singer on tour as the two set to work.

Billy Bones remembered how 'Newley felt trapped doing the cabaret circuit. When he started writing again he was much happier, he had something to look forward to.' But Bones was curious about this new collaboration. To him,

Stanley Ralph Ross was nothing more than a TV hack writer and Bones felt keenly that Tony had taken a big step down from Leslie Bricusse to be writing with him. 'I think Tony chose Ross because he knew that he would get what he wanted and wouldn't have to compete with someone who knew what they were doing. This was a big break for Ross so Tony could call the shots whereas what Tony really needed was someone to goose him. Tony wrote a lot of it on his own.'

Newley poured himself into his work. He felt he was labouring harder than ever before and was truly humbled to be given this opportunity to write about and play Chaplin. He wanted the show to be extraordinary, to break theatrical boundaries, and for his own writing talents to be pushed to greater heights.

Ray Katz, who was equally enthusiastic about the project, decided to produce the show and brought James Nederlander on board as co-producer, with the intention of taking the show to New York. The budget was set at four million dollars. Ian Fraser transcribed the music and was employed as musical supervisor, conductor and arranger for the show and he was excited by the quality of work coming from Newley. Transcribing the score was at times exacting: 'Tony was more difficult to work with because melodically he went in strange places. It was a challenge. He would go off at odd angles but he knew *exactly* what he wanted and where he was going. It's quite sophisticated in many ways, much more so than Leslie at times.' Fraser mused:

Newley listened to music a lot. He liked classical music and absorbed it, and that probably influenced what he wrote. I think *Chaplin* was the most sophisticated stuff he ever wrote. He was much more theatrical in his writing and found a way to take the line of the show and set that up musically. In many ways as a composer, I thought it was probably his best piece of theatre writing. Very ambitious and very different. I think he dug deep.

In December, Newley, Ross, Fraser and eight singers presented a reading of *Chaplin* in Los Angeles in order to tempt one of America's leading choreographers, Michael Smuin, to join the team as director. Smuin, who was also the director of the San Francisco Ballet, had recently returned from Broadway, having enjoyed a smash hit with *Sophisticated Ladies*. He was intrigued by the piece and its aim to examine and comment on Chaplin's private life while cloaking itself in old style music hall spectacle. He feared, however, that the writers' attempt to recount the whole of Chaplin's life, and the need therefore to involve another two young actors to play Chaplin as a boy and young man, would prove too ambitious and 'wouldn't fly'. Still, his confidence in the show was such that he agreed to direct it and was pleased to be promised

a free hand in the show's development as well as a large percentage of the takings.

Chaplin was workshopped the following spring. Smuin was aware from the start that there were fundamental problems with the book and made numerous suggestions, most of which were welcomed by the writers. Casting in earnest followed and the show went into rehearsal in June prior to its LA opening at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in August. There it was to play for six weeks before transferring to New York for its Broadway premiere in November.

During rehearsals the writers continued to work on the piece, although it was becoming apparent that Ross and Newley did not always see eye to eye. It seemed to Smuin that Stanley Ralph Ross was the one that was getting things done: 'He would write and then Newley would come in and check it. He worked the poor man to death.' Ross complained that he was beginning to feel like Newley's assistant rather than his collaborator while Newley, who had become consumed by the piece, voiced privately to various people that he wished he could have done it all by himself, as he sincerely believed that the voice of Chaplin was speaking through him.

Newley was also becoming less amenable about the changes that the director, and subsequently the producers, wanted. The original idea for the show allowed Newley to cut the narrative up so that he could 'fast forward' to points in Chaplin's life and then be able to rewind to fill in the story. Any confusion for an audience was to be unravelled by the presence of three narrators: Newley as himself, commenting on the action; Newley as Chaplin, both satirising and re-enacting the events of his life; and the character of Stan Laurel also relating the tale. Unfortunately, this device led to a tendency for repetition on stage as Newley would introduce a scene by explaining what was about to happen, the scene would then be played out, followed by a song that reflected upon the action that had gone before. As his ideas were simplified and made less radical, Newley became increasingly morose. His creation was slowly but surely being transformed and, as far as he was concerned, destroyed by third parties whose only objective was to put together a commercial hit. Newley predicted that he was going to fail at the hands of the critics due to the actions of others.

As previews began at the end of July, Chaplin was still 'work in progress'. Smuin's worries remained but Newley was now digging in his heels. He refused to accept Smuin's direction and had taken to belittling Ross openly. Even his long-standing friendship with Katz was beginning to suffer: 'There were times when he would say, "Okay I'll try it that way tonight,"' Smuin recalled, 'and most of the time it would be better but he wouldn't recognise it at all.' Newley also began to annex more and more of the show for himself, demanding that certain numbers should be given to Chaplin to sing. Smuin, at times, resisted:

'But you wrote it for the child Chaplin.'

'I know,' Newley replied, 'but it's my song and I'll write something to get me in and out of it.'

Ross rolled his eyes and Smuin capitulated. He knew it made no sense within the story but it was clear to him that what Newley had said he wanted to do with the show and what he was now doing were two markedly different things: 'The initial script was very good but he just kept pushing himself forward all the time,' Smuin recalled. 'He wasn't doing the show that he'd written. He wanted to be on the stage every minute. I think Newley saw the world passing him by and he was desperate to get on the stage. His judgement became very clouded. Then it was to hell with the story and the cast. It was just him on the stage.'

Newley was wretched and, most uncharacteristically, didn't even enjoy the wealth of talent around him: indeed he seemed threatened by the youngest Chaplin's ability to stop the show. As his exhaustion grew, his performances became unpredictable. 'Sometimes he would come on stage, close his eyes and sing the song and just not move,' remembered Smuin. 'I would say "Newley, what's the matter? All the business...all the actors are standing there waiting to interact with you." And he would just say, "I didn't feel it."'

Moreover, Newley was not good in the role. Although he was energetic, vocally powerful and dextrous in his execution of the Chaplinesque slapstick, there was something prosaic about his performance. He hadn't been helped by the fact that the Chaplin estate refused use of the Little Tramp image: the baggy pants, bowler hat and bent cane were nowhere to be seen in the production. But there was more to Newley's troubles than that: he couldn't subdue his own personality enough to become Chaplin. What the audience saw was Anthony Newley – the hands, the voice, the knock-kneed stance: Chaplin didn't get a look in. As Ian Fraser remarked, 'I spent about six months of my life looking up and seeing Newley not Chaplin.'

Herb Ross, who was invited to see the show by Ray Katz, was less generous:

Tony had a fatal flaw and that was that he was too sentimental. In *Chaplin* there was no one to edit him or pull him back and he was awful in it. It was Newley at his worst with every excess; he went too far. The character too was so unsympathetic. You had to make him into a fictitious figure to like him.

Smuin agreed that Newley himself never became Chaplin but was willing to accept that maybe that was due to his own failings as a director.

As the press night approached, Smuin asked Newley, for the good of the show, to step down and relinquish the role to a younger actor they had auditioned some weeks earlier. Newley was enraged as Smuin tried to explain:

'Tony, you know you've written a great show. The music is good and the scenery and costumes are wonderful and the dancing is terrific. You have a great cast. Let this show have some life. Take yourself out. You're not really enjoying yourself anyway.'

Newley could hardly contain his anger and hurt. 'My dear boy,' he managed to say, 'I only wrote this show to get back on the stage.'

On 12 August, *Chaplin* opened and at 11pm the same night it received its first review. Television critic Gary Franklin broadcast live from the theatre and gave the show a nine out of ten rating and urged the public to 'go get your tickets now!' Newley was vindicated. And then the newspaper reviews began to arrive.

The *Daily Variety* opened with, 'There should be a good musical in the life of Charlie Chaplin, but Anthony Newley and Stanley Ralph Ross haven't found it.' The same critic continued with the opinion that 'the busy and attractive scenery is the star of the show. Made up of forty-one scenes, the show plays like rush hour on the freeway.' The *LA Times* was disparaging: 'Not only is the psychologising pretentious and unnecessary, it backfires,' and the *Herald-Examiner* concluded, 'There is scant hope that even the greatest cosmeticians will be able to disguise its basic emptiness.' Newley's performance was considered undistinguished by the majority of the reviewers.

The critics were not confined to the press: 'There were some wonderful songs in it but it just didn't work,' Dareth said. 'He was too close to it. It was like having a baby. Of course your baby is going to be gorgeous and he thought it was gorgeous. But to the rest of us it wasn't.' Tony's friend A J Carothers thought that Tony was trying to tell the story of a not very attractive person: 'Chaplin himself was not the most admirable or loveable person. It seemed to me that you were trying to sell a character that was not easy to sell.' And Biff Liff, Newley's friend and producer from *Greasepaint*, summed up by saying, 'Tony wasn't very good, the play wasn't very good. The script and music weren't good enough. It wasn't funny; it was dark; it was very unappealing and the book just wasn't good enough. Another time it could have been extraordinary, but it wasn't.'

Smuin compiled a work sheet of alterations and improvements to the show and with Ross's backing (and despite Newley's resistance), began to effect the changes. Katz, Nederlander and investor David Susskind, however, decided to call in outside help. Smuin was replaced as director by George Schaefer but continued to act as choreographer. Larry Grossman and Ellen Fitzhugh, whom Ian Fraser had introduced to *Chaplin* and who had already written one of the show's best songs ('Remember Me'), stayed on to assist. Herb Ross declined the invitation to work on the piece and suggested that instead they should close the show in Los Angeles and forget about taking it

any further. Leslie Bricusse was having lunch at the Hotel du Cap in Antibes when he was approached by Susskind. Describing himself as the principal backer of the show, he explained that *Chaplin* was in trouble and asked if Bricusse could travel to LA the next day. 'I went because of Newley,' Bricusse said. 'I got the next plane and saw the show the same night.'

For several days Newley, Ross, Fraser and the expanded production team would carry out an artistic post mortem after each show. The writers would then rewrite the scenes in question ready for the company to rehearse the changes the next day. 'It was a never-ending trauma,' Fraser remembered.

Despondent and fatigued, Newley watched as more and more of his ideas were removed or remodelled. Bricusse was only too aware of Newley's reluctance to accommodate outside assistance: 'Newley didn't want to know. I stayed for three or four days but he didn't want any help and I know I could have helped him with half a dozen places in the show.' Sandy Gallin did however have Newley's ear. Gallin had agreed with Katz to relay to the actor any observation or note from the assorted interested parties on the condition that he, Gallin, thought the comment to be valid. Newley would laugh when Sandy walked into his room and ask wryly, 'And what consensus of opinion do we have today?'

The work paid off. Newley's performance improved dramatically and the audience reaction to the show, which had been generally positive so far, was now enthusiastic. Ray Katz persuaded the critics to take a second look and this time *Chaplin* received a clutch of unanimously favourable reviews. The ticket sales continued to fall however and with a \$1 million shortfall, the show's transfer to New York looked unlikely. David Susskind's faith in the show had increased and it was he who, having made a further deal with the *Nederlanders*, called the cast onto the stage before their final performance in Los Angeles, and announced that *Chaplin* would, after all, be opening on 10 November at the Mark Hellinger Theatre in New York. The next morning the sets and costumes were loaded onto ten trucks to make the journey eastwards and the company began to reorganise their lives. Apartments were let in LA and rented in New York; chaperones were found for the children who were taken out of their schools and Newley eagerly prepared for his return to Broadway after a seventeen-year-absence.

'I was walking out of the front door ready to leave with my trunk when the phone rang,' Billy Bones recalled, 'and I was told to wait. There was a problem.' The deal between *Nederlander* and Susskind had broken down. Doubting that Susskind actually had the money to invest, James *Nederlander* had demanded a \$500,000 payment up front. Susskind had agreed to pay the money in two instalments but that did not satisfy *Nederlander*. The two parties could not reach a compromise and an all too important, eleventh hour meeting between Susskind's representative and *Nederlander* reportedly came to an

abrupt end because the elevator door closed during a final attempt to reach a conclusion. Both Susskind and Nederlander washed their hands of the whole project.

Newley was devastated. What should have been the relaunch of his career had turned into its wake. He had thought *Chaplin* would save him – and he needed to be saved. He hid away, refusing to leave his bedroom for days at a time. There, in darkness and buried under a mound of pillows and blankets, he slept. And slept. Shelby called him the mole. He insisted that every morning she should come and say goodbye before leaving for school and every morning he would say, 'I love you today.'

'He took the failure very badly. The man of all hats – it turned out that he couldn't wear all the hats,' Dareth recalled. 'He didn't blame anybody but he absolutely hated the press for what they had written. It took him months to get over that.'

As the pain eased and night once again turned into day, Newley returned to the cabaret circuit and numerous guest appearances on TV shows such as *Fame*, *Hart to Hart* and *Simon and Simon*. More often than not, these cameos involved Newley portraying, ironically, a middle-aged English actor who had fallen on hard times. Newley's times weren't so hard: in 1984 he grossed \$500,000 for twelve weeks' worth of engagements. Even so, it was a big come-down from the multi-million dollar earnings of the seventies and he couldn't bear to be sitting around doing nothing. He disliked his new house on Hutton Drive too and seemed embarrassed that he no longer lived in a mansion. Newley was nervous about the lack of venues that wanted his act and called Ray Katz every day pleading with him, 'You've got to get me work. I want to work. I want to work.' Rose Gramalia, a manager in the Katz office, concentrated on getting him TV jobs, but it was not easy to get past the casting directors who, ignoring his talents as an actor, considered Newley's persona to be too eccentric for many of their shows. Some obstacles, however, could be found closer to home. On one occasion, she and Alan David proposed to Ray that they suggest Tony for director of a particular TV movie. To their surprise, Ray forbade them to pursue that avenue and explained, 'Tony might fail and he wouldn't be able to take that.' Rose Gramalia was aghast: 'Ray closed many potential doors for Tony before we even tried to open them.' Tony was aware of Ray's negative influence on his career but lamented his helplessness to Rose and, somewhat pathetically, cited his own lack of a father as the reason that he gave so much paternal power to Ray.

His relationship with Dareth was also going through a difficult period. They had stopped socialising and had become quite isolated. For a time they had hosted regular Sunday brunches as Tony didn't like to go out or entertain at night – he just wanted to go to bed. Dareth ceased arranging dinner parties

after one particular evening when Tony, mid-meal, deserted his guests, Sydney Sheldon, Esther Williams and Edward Bell. Without even attempting to excuse himself, Tony got up from the table and left the room. After several minutes, Dareth followed him upstairs to find him in his pyjamas in bed. 'That's how Tony would act,' Dareth recalled.

Gradually Tony became more and more reclusive. He sought the company of A J and Caryl Carothers, the Swifts and the Standings – couples who, significantly perhaps, were in happy and lengthy marriages – and he enjoyed trips to their good friends, Alan and Lynn Wilk's ranch where he could roam around their thousand acres alone, engross himself in the writings of Alan Watts or ride out with the children. He spent time with Shelby and Chris, taking them to the park or reading with them, and always had flowers delivered to Dareth and Shelby when he went away, but Dareth couldn't help noticing that he was slowly but surely distancing himself from his family.

His bouts of depression would once again force Tony to retreat to his room. Dareth would have to bring his meals up to him; numerous snacks as he always wanted little bits of things to eat. After three days or so of waiting on him hand and foot, Dareth would climb the stairs and gently try to cajole him into leaving his room: 'Look, you need to be with your family. Dinner is at 6:30 tonight, I'm making spaghetti. If you want to eat then you need to get up, have a shower, get dressed and come down and be part of the family.'

Dareth was worried. She had grown used to Tony's emotional highs and lows over the years but now she wanted him to seek help. Tony refused. She confided to Herman Raucher that she thought Tony might be crazy and, knowing he owned a gun, she at times feared for her life. Then in the January of 1985, Dareth noticed other changes in Tony's behaviour. His black moods were now affecting the rest of the family and in addition he would fire off hurtful remarks at Dareth. Any suggestion that she made about taking a trip or planning an outing was met with an unpleasant rejoinder or scornful put-down which, Dareth thought, was unlike Tony. Sure, he had a depressed nature about him but he had always been charming and sweet, and tried not to say anything that might be hurtful. There were fewer visits at night as well. He continued to hug his wife and kiss her affectionately but he built a wall around his body, making it clear that he was no longer interested in being intimate. Dareth recalled, 'I just had to try my best and for the children I tried to make everything normal.'

The strain of several distressing months came to a head one week before the Easter holiday. Dareth was dyeing and decorating Easter eggs for the children's egg hunt and asked Tony to come out and help. In the past he had always played an active part in such events but this time he showed no interest whatsoever: in fact, he appeared to resent the whole enterprise going on at

all. When Shelby and Chris had left the room, Dareth asked Tony why he didn't want to participate in the Easter preparations – likewise why he no longer wanted to participate in family life? Tony turned on her and with unexpected and unrestrained anger accused her of being too demanding and of wanting of him to do things that he wasn't the slightest bit interested in.

'But you've always been Father Christmas; you've always loved Easter,' Dareth reasoned.

Newley suddenly lashed out at Dareth across the work top. His clenched fist missed her cheek by an inch. He straightened up and with an expression that frightened Dareth, moved around the island to grab her. She darted out of his way but then, as suddenly as it had manifested itself, Tony's anger ebbed away. Clutching the work top and sobbing uncontrollably, he shouted, 'My God, I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry.'

Dareth had never known Tony to hit or physically abuse anyone. She hadn't recognised the man who had just that minute tried to attack her. His face, his whole demeanour had altered: 'He became somebody I never knew before.' Taking him in her arms, Dee said through her own tears, 'Tony, there is something wrong with you. I don't know what it is but you need to see a doctor.' Convinced that her husband was having some sort of breakdown, she hoped he would arrange to meet a psychiatrist but instead Newley booked an appointment the next morning with his internist, Dr Alvin Sellers. Sellers gave him a thorough check-up but failed to find anything of concern during the appointment. Instead he advised Newley to go home and await the results of the blood and urine tests. The next day Dr Sellers called Tony to tell him that they had found a trace of blood in his urine and that for safety's sake they would like him to come in for an ultrasound. Tony and Dareth went to the clinic and a short way into the procedure Sellers was called to look at the monitor. Within moments of seeing the screen he turned to Tony and placed both hands on his shoulders. It was clear that something was dreadfully wrong. Dr Sellers told him that there was a large growth around his left kidney and that in all probability this would be malignant. The organ would have to be removed at the earliest opportunity. Tony and Dareth returned home to sit out the four-day wait before the preoperative tests and to face the Easter weekend.

Newley was beside himself with fear. He couldn't eat or sleep and paced around the house, terrified that the disease had already spread. That first night home he drove to the beach and walked along the sands until dawn. Gracie came to look after the children so that Dareth could stay by his side and, with the help of David and Micheline Swift, Newley somehow summoned the strength to get through the week. The following weekend, Newley was admitted, under a false name, to the UCLA clinic, where the kidney was removed. In an attempt to assuage the desperation he felt, Newley had bet the

surgeon that the tumour wasn't malignant and pinned a dollar to his gown before being wheeled into the operating theatre. On waking some hours later, Newley saw that he had lost the bet.

Although the tumour had all but encapsulated his kidney, the consultant assured Newley that he was certain the rest of the body was clear. There would be no radiotherapy or chemotherapy needed, only regular check-ups with the cancer clinic. As far as the consultant was concerned, the prognosis was good and Newley was cured. As Newley left the hospital some days later, the surgeon told him that they had got it and that Tony should go and live his life.

Newley convalesced. He changed his diet and gave up alcohol. David Swift lightened his friend's spirits by giving Tony 'his kidney' (made from an eggplant and length of rubber hosing) preserved in a jar of ethanol, saying that it was a gift from the clinic. 'Tony nearly broke his stitches laughing,' Swift recalled.

Within weeks, Newley was back at work. Before his diagnosis and subsequent operation, Newley had been playing the Mad Hatter in a star-studded adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* produced by Irwin Allen for CBS, with songs composed by Newley's friend, the comedian and actor, Steve Allen and choreography by Gillian Lynne. Lynne was told by Irwin Allen to stage the numbers once with Ann Jillian (who was playing the Red Queen) and Tony, and once without. When Lynne asked why, Irwin replied, 'They're both ill.' Ann Jillian had also been diagnosed with cancer at that time. Roddy McDowall and Arte Johnson aided Newley in the antics around the tea party table, often asking Gillian Lynne to stall the director Harry Harris, so that they could sort out some shtick in their caravan. Their performances were charming and Newley's rendition of Allen's 'Just Laugh' displayed yet again the ease and mastery with which he combined his talents as singer and actor. Steve Allen later said that the reason he thought Newley sang the number with such conviction was because it represented his own thinking. Perhaps he was right.

Alice in Wonderland was over-produced in every way but its bevy of bizarrely cast and eccentrically dressed stars proved attraction enough. Where else, other than Hollywood, would one find Lewis Carroll's *Wonderland* populated by such personages as Sammy Davis Jr, Robert Morley, Red Buttons, Ernest Borgnine, Sid Caesar, Carol Channing, Eydie Gorme, Merv Griffin, Harvey Korman, Steve Lawrence, Karl Malden, Donald O'Connor, Martha Raye, Ringo Starr, Jack Warden and Shelley Winters – and where else would Telly Savalas be cast as the Cheshire Cat?

That summer Newley starred in a re-staging of *Chaplin* at the Theater under the Stars in Houston, Texas. This time he directed as well but the show's ten-day run was as disastrous as the LA premiere. Once again the set

had become monolithic, overshadowing much of what took place on stage. But for all its technical wizardry *Chaplin* was no more convincing the second time around; as one designer on the show commented, 'No matter how many flowers you put around a mobile home, it's still a trailer.'

The cabaret engagements had dwindled to but a handful of bookings and movie offers were sparse. In the autumn of 1985, Newley played the opportunist publicist Victor Coles opposite Robert Preston's self-confessed murderer and Beau Bridges' idealistic lawyer in Irwin Allen's unimpressive TV movie, *Outrage*. The following January, Newley appeared briefly as a down-at-heel liquor salesman and fellow passenger of Kris Kristofferson, Willie Nelson and Johnny Cash in a doleful TV remake of John Ford's classic *Stagecoach* courtesy of Raymond Katz Productions. 1986 saw Newley and Bacharach perform their last concerts together.

Tony remained traumatised for months after the operation and began to refer to himself as 'old'. He also started to think about returning to England for good. For a period his relationship with Dareth improved dramatically. Now he needed her and paid her a great deal more attention, calling frequently when on the road and sending bouquet after bouquet of flowers. Dareth gave up many of her own commitments to be with Tony and was constantly on hand to answer his calls or care for him at home. She found his renewed interest in her reassuring, but also smothering.

In the summer of '86, exactly twenty-five years after stepping onto the stage at the Queen's Theatre in London, Newley embarked on a seven-month American tour of *Stop the World - I Want to Get Off*. Billy Bones felt Newley was going backwards and knew that he would rather have been doing something new. Evie was played by Susie Plakson who at six foot and an inch made Newley's Littlechap littler than ever. At her audition, Newley asked what her star sign was. 'Gemini,' she replied.

Newley smiled and said, 'We must never get married.'

'It's a deal,' Plakson retorted.

'Where do you see yourself in the business right now?' he continued.

Plakson hadn't thought but then answered with sudden confidence, 'About to grab the bottom rung.'

She and Newley became close friends during the tour, although Dareth's concerns that Tony was having an affair with his leading lady were unfounded. Newley picked a talented cast to support him and the company soon became a close-knit family. Plakson believed that the 'remarkably sweet chemistry' that existed between them all was due to Newley's benignancy.

Newley's performance varied as did the houses. In the north east he was as popular as ever, in the Midwest it was a struggle to fill the theatres. At times he re-tapped the youthful energy that had caused such a stir in the sixties, at

times he seemed to play the role by rote. He never lost his ability to charm the most unresponsive of audiences. During a painfully quiet evening in Dallas, Newley embarked on the second act monologue in which Littlechap starts to come to terms with his past. Just as he began, a baby in the auditorium began to cry. Newley ignored the wailing for several seconds but finally did a take to the audience. They snickered and the baby continued its ululation. Newley looked out to where the noise was emanating from and declaimed in his best Ralph Richardson, 'Madam, how lovely to bring your child to the theatre.' Now the audience laughed and Newley added, 'But when it becomes a critic... It is time to GO!' A roar came from the crowd.

'The house came down around him, and every word he spoke after that, every eyebrow he lifted, they worshipped him, just worshipped him,' Plakson recalled.

Off stage, Newley was extremely unhappy. His calls to Dareth became despairing. He was repulsed by the fourteen-inch scar that desecrated the body he still described as his temple. He was lonely and homesick and he didn't want to be involved with the show. He was also contemplating suicide. Dareth did her best to talk him through his depression, to support him even though they were thousands of miles apart. But as the months passed she felt him slipping away from her: he stopped sharing his thoughts and again began to isolate himself from his family.

As the tour came to an end Billy Bones, Newley's right-hand man for eight years, decided to return to his first love, television. Tony was sad to lose his friend but understood that it was time for Bones to move on. Bones remembered a conversation he had once had when he told Tony that he wanted to marry a woman who was his best friend: 'Because down the pike, when you're seventy years old and you look shit, you want at least a good friend with you.' Newley looked dumbfounded. 'Jeez,' he said after a moment, 'I've never even thought of that!'

'Tony was more like a father to me,' Bones reflected. 'It was fun to look at the world through his telescope.'

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

WHAT KIND OF FOOL AM I?

AS THE TOUR ENDED in late February 1987, Newley went back to Hutton Drive and very little work. In the following twelve months he made just four appearances with his cabaret act. There was a brief tour to Australia in the fall and for \$75,000 he swallowed any pride he had left to star in an atrocious and repellent movie entitled *The Garbage Pail Kids*. At home, he and Dee were tender with each other and tried to ignore the rift that had opened between them.

Newley's interest in Alan Watts had given way to an obsession with psychics. He would have readings each day, sometimes more often, from a variety of mediums and tarot card fortune-tellers. So enthralled was he by their 'knowledge' of his every mood and need that he would readily turn down job offers or change his future plans, should a warning to do so have come from one of his many psychics. He firmly believed in reincarnation and was told by one medium that he and Joan had been together before the sixties and that in another life he had been the acclaimed American actor Edwin Booth, brother of President Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth. Dareth's frustration and disbelief that Tony could allow such people to sway his every decision did nothing to help their fragile marriage.

In March '88, opening for Rich Little, Newley played the Desert Inn and Las Vegas for the very last time. He went back to LA and took over looking after the children, while Dareth went to Florida to visit her mother, who was seriously ill. On her return, Dareth was disturbed to find on their answer machine several amorous messages for Tony from a woman in Toronto. When Tony came home, Dee questioned him about the messages and asked him if he was seeing somebody else. Tony admitted that there had been another woman in his life but that she didn't mean anything to him. When pressed by Dareth to say how he saw their marriage progressing, Tony revealed that he had made his mind up to leave in a few weeks' time. He had already told Sacha of his intention to go and his son had asked, 'What's wrong with Dareth?'

There was nothing wrong with Dareth, Newley replied, he just didn't want to be married anymore. Nor did he want to be locked into a relationship anymore. He wanted to be free, and to do as he wished. His decision to leave may very well have been prompted by a visit to a psychic shortly after his cancer treatment. There he was warned that should he remain in his marriage to Dareth, he would most surely die.

Dareth balked at the idea of continuing to cook and wash for a husband who was planning to abandon her and the children in a couple of weeks. She suggested he should leave there and then. Their conversation was interrupted by Shelby's arrival home. She saw her parents sitting, as usual, close to each other on the sofa, kissed them both and said goodnight. A few moments later, Newley left the house and drove to Gracie's home down by the beach. For three weeks he returned each day to Hutton Drive to eat and play with the children until Dee, discomfited by his daily presence, broke the routine and told him that they should set up a schedule for him to see the children and for them to visit Grandma.

Shelby had assured both Tony and Dee that she would cope with their separation even though her greatest fear had come true. She seemed to have built an inner strength, and was somehow able to comfort and support her parents without having any idea of how to care for herself. She told her mother that there were avenues before them but that unless they 'got up and got dressed', they would never know what lay ahead. To her father she said that every individual had the right to be happy at whatever cost.

'Where those things came from to this day I'll never know,' she said later, 'but I knew what to say so that they knew that I would be okay. But it was crushing. Desperately, desperately sad.'

It was Shelby who discovered that Tony was seeing Kristin Halin, a nineteen-year-old whom he had met in Vegas during his Desert Inn engagement. At fifteen, Shelby found this relationship difficult to comprehend, and was further confused by her father's expectations of her. Shelby was playing the lead role in her school's production of *The Philadelphia Story*, and Newley brought Gracie and Kristin to the first performance. He pointed out his girlfriend to Shelby before the play began and laughed nervously when his daughter commented on how young she looked. Shelby ran backstage and burst into tears. After the show, Shelby joined her family in the auditorium. She hugged Dad and Grandma, and was introduced to Kristin. Somewhat reserved but nothing less than polite, Shelby said how nice it was to meet her and warmly thanked her for coming to see the play which she hoped had been enjoyable. She then made her excuses and went to talk to some other friends who were there especially to see her. After ten minutes Newley grabbed her arm, spun her around and berated her over her treatment of his guest. He said how he had thought she was more mature and that he was embarrassed at her reaction towards Kristin, whom he had assured would be openly accepted by his daughter. Shelby was livid. How dare he do this to her? Hadn't she been the perfect gentlewoman towards Kristin when others might not have given her the time of day? How dare he expect her approval?

'This was my night!' she shouted at her father.

'Get your clothes on and get in the car,' Newley ordered.

Shelby never acted in another play again. 'He shattered my dream that night and I don't think I ever forgave him for that,' she said later. 'He had defiled an incredible woman who had given up everything for her children and husband and then he expected me to go along with it. I was a little too young to do that. It was a very difficult situation. I did my best and was admonished for it.' It would be several years before Newley finally realised and apologised for the pain he had caused his daughter that summer evening.

Kristin was not liked by many of Tony's friends: Billy Bones thought Newley was making a fool of himself: 'He was so blind. He was like a high school kid and she was just looking for a career. I told him that he was an idiot giving up Dareth and his family. I didn't like Kristin at all.' A J and Caryl Carothers were taken aback by his involvement with such a young girl and Micheline and David Swift were uncomfortable about seeing him with Kristin. But to some it came as no surprise that he had left Dareth; he had always intended to leave her, and had said so on a number of occasions before and after Christopher's birth. Newley had told Rose Gramalia and his former love, Tink, that he would leave when Christopher reached his tenth birthday. To them, Kristin's arrival on the scene merely hurried the inevitable along. Newley, however, declared Kristin to be his soulmate.

Throughout the months that followed his departure from Hutton Drive, Newley entered his own Slough of Despond and leaned heavily upon his friend, A J Carothers. A J was aware that their relationship was somewhat one-sided as he took pains to avoid any seeming criticism of Newley: 'That was not what he needed at that time in his life,' A J remembered. 'He was like a hurt animal at that point, you didn't want to kick him, you wanted to make him feel better. So even if he was doing something idiotic, I wouldn't tell him so.'

Living with Gracie was difficult too. Her doting was comforting yet suffocating. Here he was at fifty-seven years old, back with his mother and once again dependent upon her to care for him. Newley felt as though he had come full circle and that his lifelong quest to escape his past had, in fact, brought him back to where he had started. By running away from Dareth he had finally come face to face with himself. For one week in July '88, Newley kept a diary and within its pages attempted to make sense of his life. Writing about his time as an evacuee in Sawbridgeworth, Newley recounted:

Of course my spirit had already been broken before I reached her door. The eight years of childhood previous to 1939 had been just as hellish. A life dominated by monstrous men and women without tenderness or understanding. I realised again, however, that the pictures were all taken from outside my body. The only way to save my sanity

was to step outside my self and watch life as an observer. This has stayed with me, turning me into a fantasist.

He continued on 19 July:

My blessed mother, God love her, supplied a very valuable clue to the understanding of my self-imposed madness. She remembered trying to abort me. My determination to live places responsibility for my life squarely on my own shoulders proving again the contention that there are 'no victims'. I chose to live. To live through that hellish childhood that conditioned me for ever to dance this self-destructive jig that I call my life.

It would be a mockery of all that unhappiness if I now neglect my art. Rather one should harness all the pain and put it to work.

His last entry on 23 July had a revelatory tone:

In remembering my childhood; (and it never occurred to me before) I had always recalled those years with the somewhat grave and detached air of an adult. It came as a great shock to realise the other day, suddenly, that I was Christopher's age (the thought of sending Chris away on his own for years to a strange cottage with an old lady is horrendous... And yet that is what happened to me).

His final thoughts displayed a determined resolve to prevail once more:

The paranoia of these last few years about the lack of work and professional stature can be understood at last. My sense of identity has always been tied to my fame. Without Anthony Newley the performer, I was nothing. Now as my fame diminishes my sense of identity was diminishing with it, causing acute anxiety. I must understand more fully the richness of myself as a functioning member of the human race – the fame is a bonus and not myself.'

Newley concluded that if there was a way forward then it was to go back to England. Peter Charlesworth was enthusiastic about the opportunities that awaited Newley should he return home. PC offered to represent his old friend and the two began discussions about a West End production of *Stop the World* with Newley both starring and directing. Brickman and Newberg came together briefly to work on a joint project based on the story of *Jack the Ripper* but once again the two parted without success. Newley continued to ply his trade wherever he could in America. He made a stylish and highly camp appearance in the comic spy thriller *Boris and Natasha in Our Man Badenov* alongside Sally Kellerman and David Thomas, and continued to sing at the Fairmont Hotels in San Francisco and Chicago, though with a reduced band.

On 8 May 1989, at Radio City Music Hall in New York, Bricusse and Newley were inducted into The American Songwriters' Hall of Fame. They were only the fourth and fifth Englishmen, after Noël Coward, John Lennon and Paul McCartney, to have been honoured by the National Academy of Popular Music. The award was presented to the writers by their friend Liza Minelli and both men made a short speech. Bricusse graciously thanked both the Academy and the singers that had made their songs famous, then blew a kiss to Evie. Newley took the mic and gesturing towards Bricusse, said, 'Everything I know about music I owe to this man – but even he couldn't teach me how to write.' And then, for the first time since their meeting thirty years previously, Newley publicly acknowledged Ian Fraser's contribution to their songs. He added, 'And I know that Les would also like to share this with Ian.' In typically self-effacing fashion, Newley continued, 'When you think of the competition we've been up against for this award – you have to assume we probably got it on looks alone.'

With Newley determined to leave America, Dareth decided to relocate her family to Florida. Back in London, Tony and Gracie rented a tiny apartment in Kensington as a stop-gap before making the final decision of whether or not to sell the house in the Palisades. Newley had little money to spare but was sure that the £600,000 revival of *Stop the World* would enjoy a similar success to the American tour of '86. Certainly his presence in London was attracting a good deal of attention from the press, attention that Newley savoured. In one interview he declared, 'I have promised the producers I will make them rich and I am only half joking.' In a more reflective moment he revealed to Herbert Kretzmer his hopes of a new beginning: 'I'm back in London, reliving my life, doing the show that gave me my success, being given another chance.'

Stop the World opened at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley for a three-week run prior to its transfer to the Lyric Theatre (one block from the Queen's) on Shaftesbury Avenue. Within days of the first performance, the producers called in help. Bricusse, who had just watched his own *Sherlock Holmes* suffer at the hands of the critics, was saddened to see what his friend had made of this revival: 'It was abysmal. Newley did a disastrous production. You wouldn't have known it was the same show.'

Ian Fraser, called in to rescue the show's music, was speechless on seeing that Newley had staged 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' as a dream fantasy, complete with diaphanous-gowned girls drifting around him as he sang. Fraser exploded, 'You have got to be fucking kidding, Newberg! That's your moment. You don't need all that shit on the stage.' Fraser was not even convinced that the show was valid any longer: 'That production showed that *Stop the World* had become a period piece.'

The producers asked theatre director David Gilmore to take a look at the show. He duly went to Bromley but was not impressed by what he saw. 'The show was lacking in direction,' he recalled, 'It was lumpy, misshapen and some of the material didn't stand up anymore. I thought it was pretty terrible but there was enough good in it to make me think I could do something with it.' His reserved eagerness was checked though when the producers informed him that he had but a week to turn the show around. Gilmore advised them that in his opinion the show needed redesigning, re-choreographing, re-staging and rethinking. He was right: it needed a completely fresh look.

He advised them to put the production to bed and not to risk taking it into London. The producers explained that to cancel the show was out of the question and pressured Gilmore to try, anonymously even, to give them the help they required. Gilmore agreed and set to work reshaping the show although he couldn't help thinking that the result of his efforts would be akin to jumping out of a sinking ship into a sinking lifeboat. The company, now working day and night, responded well to his direction and Newley was entirely amenable to Gilmore's advice, even if it seemed that his heart was not in it. 'The man was like a broken reed,' Gilmore thought. 'He was adrift on the production. He was in something, yet not in it. Like it was a dream happening around him.'

Gilmore liked Newley but never saw the sparkle in his performance – the actor was 'dead behind the eyes', as if he were already resigned to his fate – and was bemused by Newley's rendition of 'What Kind of Fool'. 'It was mechanical,' Gilmore observed. 'It was as if, the moment the intro started, a pre-recorded disc slotted in his head and out came the way he 'did' it. It was a mass of mannerisms in which he parodied himself. It was almost a parody of a parody.' Gilmore spoke gently to Newley about stripping away the accretions of mannerisms. Newley listened: he wanted, genuinely, to improve his performance. Once on stage however, he unwittingly reverted to the familiar, the comfortable, the well-worn delivery crafted from a thousand nights in front of the 'monster with a thousand eyes'. Gilmore feared that by overplaying the song in such an affected way while at the same time portraying Littlechap, Newley's performance would err towards the bathetic.

On 19 October, a speedier and tighter *Stop the World* opened. The cast were happier now and there was a distinct sense of relief amongst the company to have got through the first night. Although the reviews were somewhat kinder than the ones Gilmore had predicted a week earlier, they were still mainly awful. The score was praised, as was Rhonda Burchmore's Evie, but Newley's performance and the show's book were savaged by critic after critic. David Gilmore himself thought that the show, like so many others, needed the era from which it emanated to have any relevance at all and concluded:

'You don't need to put on *Stop the World* to hear the fabulous songs.' The show deservedly got its notice three weeks later and closed on 25 November. Was Newley surprised? Maybe not. On the first night he had said quietly to Sacha, 'I feel like I'm falling into black space.' But Newley's studied determination in holding onto his past, coupled with the naive expectation that once again it could and should propel him toward his rightful place in the panoply of British theatrical stars, left little room for sympathy amongst friends and critics alike.

Tony and Gracie returned to Los Angeles and to the news that Dareth had filed for divorce. She had waited for a year in the hope that Tony might seek help through marriage counselling or therapy in connection with his cancer trauma. But now it seemed to her that Tony just wanted to reclaim his life and live the rest of it without his past. Initially, Tony was surprised. He had wanted his freedom but for some reason had never considered the possibility of a divorce. He eventually conceded to her request that he appoint an attorney, although he was deliberately slow throughout the procedure in responding to the legal correspondence. At one point he asked Dareth if he could join her and the children in Florida to try to piece together their relationship, but she refused. It was time to move on. He and Dareth never argued. They simply divided everything they had between them, Dareth receiving the equity in the house.

Newley lived economically with his mother at the Palisades, seeing few people other than AJ, Rose Gramalia and Tink. His relationship with Kristin had also ended, a fact which upset and angered him greatly. He had thought she loved him but he was now wondering whether Bones had been right all along. Curiously Newley had written a number of songs over the years about this very situation; of the impossibility of a relationship lasting between a young girl and older man. Even as long ago as *Heironymus* he had noted:

Soon I'll be
Facing the truth to find
Those who love youth are blind
As you leave me behind

The break up of an affair between a fifty-eight-year-old man and his nineteen-year old lover came as no surprise at all to Dareth. 'After all,' she said, 'how much bubble gum can you stand, stuck behind your ear?'

In March, Newley was invited to attend the American Film Institute's Lifetime Achievement Award ceremony for Sir David Lean. Sat between Sir John Mills and John Candy amid a spectacular gathering of stars both young and old, Newley cut a sad and worn figure. Tinkerbell, who accompanied him that evening, saw that Tony was deeply depressed and felt overshadowed by

the assembled mass. He had been asked to say a few words with regard to working with Lean on *Oliver Twist*. In the middle of a touching speech, he joked that should Sir David wish to employ him again, he would be more than happy to insert another walnut up his nose. But even as the laughter filled the room around him, there was an air of desperation about the man. He looked embarrassed, as though he had no right to be amongst such exalted company.

Newley spent the summer filming two TV movies, both remakes of popular classics. In CBS's *Three Coins in the Fountain*, starring Loni Anderson and Shanna Reed, Newley played Alfred (Clifton Webb's character in the 1954 original). During pre-production talks, the English director, Tony Wharmby, had been advised by his producer to avoid using Newley as 'he was real trouble'. Nevertheless, Wharmby's eagerness to meet Newley had remained undiminished and he invited the actor to audition for the role. After the initial pleasantries, Wharmby bit the bullet:

'Given the fact that you are my childhood idol,' the director started, 'I've been told by the producers not to cast you because you are real trouble.'

Newley was taken aback. 'What do you mean?'

Wharmby said that he had been warned that the actor had a reputation for being difficult on set and was not averse to throwing tantrums. Newley looked crushed. 'I used to do that, when I was younger, but as I've grown older I've become a bit more sensible about those things. No, I'll be a good boy. I'll be well behaved.'

Looking at the shy, diffident man seated before him Wharmby concluded that even if Newley hadn't said that, he would still have cast him. He knew that in his heyday Newley wouldn't have touched this 'Mickey Mouse' movie. He wouldn't have come to see him. 'It was sad,' Wharmby thought.

The actor was as good as his word and Wharmby enjoyed working with him. 'He would come on the set and crack a few jokes,' he remembered. 'He would be his wry, sad self and everybody would laugh. He was a terrific actor and there was a magic to him on screen.' The crew gave the actor their own tribute when, one morning, as Newley awaited a set up, they began to sing, at first almost inaudibly, 'Do You Mind?' Newley said nothing but sat and smiled. This sudden recollection of a time, now lost, when anything seemed possible and success was his for the taking must have been piquant indeed.

Newley's final starring role on the small screen came in Debbie Allen's production of *Polly Comin' Home* for Disney TV. Newley played Drabney Mayhew in this, Allen's second musical adaptation of Eleanor H Porter's classic novel *Pollyanna*. Set in 1950s Alabama, Porter's all-white story was transposed to a middle-class black community where the kindly but racist Mayhew is instated as headmaster of the local boys' orphanage. There, through

song, dance, and the guiding wisdom of Polly's aunt (played by Phylicia Rashad), the 'educated' Mayhew 'gets educated'. Newley's sympathetic performance, opposite the formidable talents of Rashad and Dorian Harewood, was good. He steered clear of Disney's – and indeed his own – mawkish tendencies, displaying the qualities of a more mature character actor. His efforts went unrewarded. With *Polly Comin' Home*, Newley's acting career in the States came to an untimely end.

With his mother, Newley returned to London and rented another apartment. They took with them an assortment of silver and gold treasures which friends and colleagues had given to Tony over the years. 'Swag' was what Gracie called them, these photograph frames and cigarette boxes – inscribed mementoes of happier times. Each was sold piecemeal to cover the rent or pay for groceries. Newley would say 'onwards and upwards', or 'we'll knuckle under', hackneyed phrases of stoic determination belying the sadness and panic within. For Gracie, the top floor flat coupled with their impecunious circumstances were too cruel a reminder of Highbury Barns. 'I don't think it hurt him as much as it hurt me,' she would later say.

In January 1991 Newley flew to New York to audition 'wives' for a new revue he had pieced together with Arnold Mittelman to be presented at the Coconut Grove Playhouse in Miami. *Once Upon A Song* was a compilation musical made up of Bricusse/Newley songs and Newley's own compositions from *Quilp*, *Chaplin* and various albums. Mittelman and Newley positioned the songs in order to create a narrative, one that, predictably, mirrored Newley's own life: here was a couple, he an entertainer, she a mother, whose marriage begins to falter as the father sees his fame and popularity dwindling. Their two children, a teenage girl and ten-year-old boy, suffer the anguish of their parents' break-up but, unlike Newley's real children, go on to enjoy Mom and Dad's eventual reconciliation, which reunites the family. Surely this was Newley reliving his own break-up with Dareth, again trying to make sense of his life by baring another open wound to the gaze of an audience. And perhaps the happy ending expressed his own desire to resurrect his relationship with Dareth. It was even being staged in Florida where she now lived. The result though, was a sugar-sweet compendium of little significance, theatrically or otherwise, that made uncomfortable viewing.

Bertilla Baker played opposite Newley and the two actors became instant friends: 'A deep soul connection – like a previous life or something,' Bertilla remembered. Newley told her about the cancer and his decision, 'in the interest of his own healing', to leave Dareth. Bertilla was aware of his neediness but never found him overt in his interest in her, he was 'always the gentleman'. Newley admired her talent to such an extent that he gave her 'There's No Such Thing As Love', the show's 'eleven o'clock' number, to sing. This gesture

was not lost on Baker. She considered the song a gift: 'I will always be grateful to him for that. He gave me artistic validation.'

The naive hope harboured by Newley that the show might be picked up and taken to New York was instantly dashed by the reviews, one of which might just as well have been written by his analyst: '*Once Upon A Song* is more often a dirge sung by characters who want to be happy and in love, but don't know how to enjoy it when it's theirs for the taking. Newley is very much in his element here: The songs bleed pathos, irony, remorse and longing.'

The show closed after only three weeks and Newley returned to London.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

WHO CAN I TURN TO?

PETER CHARLESWORTH REMAINED CONFIDENT in his client's future. There was work to be had if only Newley would show some interest. For all his need to earn money, Newley was stubborn in his desire to pursue his own projects. As with all aspects of his life, his choice of work had to be on his own terms – and those terms did not include other people's shows. He wanted a vehicle to re-establish his stardom rather than a good play in which he would merely be one of many. In the spring of 1990, Newley had appeared in concert with The New Squadronaires in an assortment of small venues around England and Wales. The tour had not been a success, prompting Newley to refuse any further offers made by the tour's producer Johnny Mans. A devotee of Newley's talent, Mans was convinced that, had Newley persevered, he would have regained the following he had enjoyed in former years. Newley, however, couldn't bear playing to empty houses. Theatre producer Bill Kenwright was also a fan of Newley's. He had queued to watch the Warwick movies as a child and been transfixed by the singer at the Liverpool Empire. For him, Newley was still the pop star, the tremulous voice that broke hearts with 'And the Heavens Cried' and 'If She Should Come to You', one of the great balladeers who had never consolidated his fame. Kenwright went to see his idol in concert, with a view to bringing Johnny Mans' tour into London, and over dinner he urged Newley to resurrect his hits from the fifties: 'You are Anthony Newley. You don't need to be the puppet on the string, you are the puppet master. Don't reinvent all the time, just be you.' Newley, sinking lower in his chair, flatly refused even to contemplate such a notion. 'He wanted to be the cabaret entertainer,' Kenwright recalled. 'He didn't want to be the pop star. He wouldn't have anything to do with it.'

Newley did accept an invitation from Joan Collins to join her in two of the eight half-hour TV episodes that made up *Tonight at 8:30*. Adapted from Noël Coward's 1935 one-act plays, Collins' co-production with the BBC was a vehicle for her own talents just as the original plays had been for Gertrude Lawrence's. Playing eight different roles, from blonde bombshell to ageing spinster, she surrounded herself with an impressive array of gifted actors including Denis Quilley, Siân Phillips and John Standing. Newley played George Pepper opposite Joan's Lily in the backstage comedy *Red Peppers*: the bickering protagonists, each one half of a tacky music hall double act, fight

like cat and dog in between their numbers on stage. In *Fumed Oak*, Newley's down-trodden Henry Gow turns savagely on his termagant wife, whining daughter and intolerable mother-in-law before abandoning them all to begin a new life abroad. During the takes, Newley and Collins had little difficulty in summoning the required animosity between their characters, but off-set the two 'got along tremendously', Collins recalled. They had long since resolved their differences and for the sake of their children had resumed a tentative friendship, which over time had developed into a warm and genuine love for each other. Newley gave superlative performances in both roles and greatly appreciated the opportunity to work once more with Joan. Taking her aside on the set one day, he smiled and said with questionable conviction, 'Joanie, we should never have broken up.'

Now that he was based in London, Newley began to seek out old friends. He contacted Jeremy Lees and Keith Smith. He reconnected with Mike Atkins, an old chum from the early movies, and the recently divorced John and Wendy Hannam. The barrister and QC Master Mike McKenzie, a lifelong fan of Newley's, became a good friend to both Tony and Gracie. Newley also caught up with the actor and Academy Award winning screenwriter Julian Fellowes. Fellowes had first met Newley while living in Los Angeles in the early 1980s and was intrigued by certain aspects of Newley's behaviour. Whenever he invited him to a party or gathering, Newley would call to ask who the other guests might be. If the list that Fellowes rattled off included other celebrities, Newley would writhe on the end of the line exclaiming that he didn't think he could go to those sorts of parties. Should he then attend the affair, Newley would spend the whole evening with the named celebrities. Fellowes remarked, 'Tony needed to be a famous person talking to another famous person.' He continued, 'He could never just be at a dinner party. He would turn up late or not at all or with three people who were not invited, although of course I always loved having him there.'

More curious was Newley's interest in Fellowes' background. He was fascinated by the actor's family tree and listened attentively to Fellowes' childhood reminiscences of ponies and tea parties, boarding school and fond farewells with his mother on smoke-filled railway platforms: 'He spun a fantasy about how family life should be. He wanted me to talk about my childhood a lot – for him it was a sort of Famous Five thing.' Fellowes thought that 'he wanted to make his own childhood all right.' If the majority of people are defined by their family history, then Newley was certainly defined by the lack of his: 'I used to tell him that it didn't matter, that he was a marvellous talent and an interesting person and so on but it didn't work. I don't think, when your childhood's gone wrong, it ever does really.'

With Mike McKenzie, Newley often talked about his failings as a father. He said that he had let his children down by walking out on them and their mothers. McKenzie would try to divert Newley's attention by focusing the conversation on his own shortcomings as a parent. Then Newley would comfort his friend: 'To be a parent one is on continual probation,' he would say. 'There are no rehearsals and you don't get a second chance.' Newley's readiness to help others was in marked contrast to his inability (in spite of the time he spent examining his own actions) to nurture himself, but as Fellowes surmised: 'What he wanted, I don't think anyone could have given him.'

Newley's behaviour continued to be erratic. Asked to speak at his goddaughter Amanda Hannam's wedding, he surprised her parents, John and Wendy, when he made it clear on arrival that he had no intention of making a speech. They rushed around the other guests and eventually persuaded Lord Parkinson to step into the breach. Then during the reception, Newley changed his mind and stood up unannounced to deliver a witty and loving tribute to Amanda completely off the cuff.

One year, Mike McKenzie and his wife invited Newley and his family to their home for Christmas. All the arrangements had been made – the food bought, the menus created around Newley's specific dietary requirements and the presents wrapped – when Newley, a day before his expected arrival, cancelled with no explanation and a cursory apology. Some weeks later, McKenzie visited Tony at his flat to drop off the presents. On opening his gift Newley tossed the contents aside with a glib and graceless remark: 'Oh Gracie, look. Another pair of cufflinks.'

At Julian Fellowes' wedding, Newley and Gracie turned up for the ceremony but failed to attend the reception. When Julian called some days later concerned that he or Gracie had perhaps been taken ill, Newley replied, 'I didn't come to the reception because when we arrived at the church I realised that people like you all knew to wear morning dress and I was in a blue suit. I couldn't have come to your reception in a blue suit.' Fellowes was dumbfounded and responded that it didn't matter what Newley was wearing and that he and Emma had been thrilled simply to have him come to the wedding at all, but Newley insisted: 'You don't understand,' he said. 'You all know the rules and I don't know the rules.'

In March 1992, Newley's solipsistic determination and sheer foolhardiness led him to redirect and star in a revival of *Once Upon A Song*. As a venue, Peter Charlesworth suggested The King's Head, a pub theatre in Islington, North London. This tiny fringe venue is internationally renowned for attracting new work, established actors and enthusiastic audiences. Many of its productions transfer into the West End, while writers' and actors' careers have been launched from its postage stamp stage. If a show is a success then a performance

at the King's Head is an exciting, raw experience for audience and actor alike; if a dud, the place seems nothing more than a decrepit pub with shabby facilities, uncomfortable chairs and expensive beer. Newley agreed to stage his revue there. PC also introduced Newley to Wendy Gadian in the hope that she would musically direct the show. The two met in a squalid rehearsal room provided by the King's Head. When she looked at the surroundings, Gadian wondered what Anthony Newley was doing in such a place. It was cold, filthy, falling down and pretty scary too, she thought. After singing through a couple of numbers, Newley pulled out a hip flask and offered her a nip. Gadian refused, explaining that she had a show to do that evening. Newley took a swig, looked around at the damp walls and said, 'Wendy, you have to know what you're letting yourself in for. This is guerilla theatre.'

During rehearsals Newley became increasingly neurotic about the show. He had difficulty in casting the role of Mother as he seemed, to Gadian, unsure of what he wanted. Eventually, a week into rehearsals, Diane Langton joined the company of four. Newley was provided with an assistant director and choreographer in Jeff Richer, but as the weeks wore on became less than responsive to his and Gadian's suggestions. Changes to songs or arrangements were accepted initially but then a day later, Newley would revert to his original way of doing things. At first Gadian would ask why he had chosen to reinstate an edited verse or replace a two bar musical bridge? Newley would reply innocently, 'Oh, didn't I tell you? I changed my mind last night.' Gadian began to suspect that Newley had a problem working with a young, female MD. She and Richer both thought that Newley was too close to the project to be objective and neither was convinced that the show was good enough to be presented in its present state – or, for that matter, that Newley was the right man to direct the material in the first place.

But amidst the self-imposed pressures to make the show a success and the misery of working in such an undesirable setting, Newley suppressed the tension he felt rising inside him. He led the cast through the rehearsals, sharing anecdotes and funny tales along the way. Over the schoolboy packed lunch that Gracie prepared for him each day, he would talk of his family and Joan, of his Las Vegas years and how the millions he had earned had come and gone. Despite the bonhomie, though, the stress he was under was palpable.

Newley may have thought that working at the King's Head was guerilla theatre but nothing could have prepared him for the vicious onslaught of the critics. *Once Upon A Song* received sixteen revues, fifteen of which were rotten: according to the *Independent* this was 'a shoestring musical held together by the slenderest of threads'; while *Time Out* thought 'it should never have been allowed to escape from the archives'. 'A complete clunker,' said *The Stage*; 'an absolute dud,' concluded the *Standard*; 'an absurd disaster, like performing

The Poseidon Adventure in a caravan,' mocked *City Limits*; the *Sunday Express* simply advised its readers, 'You don't want to go near it.'

Worse was the personal abuse that Newley was subjected to. The *Evening Standard's* Nicholas de Jongh compared Newley to Mr Toad and wondered, 'How could he have sunk so far?' Michael Darvell in *What's On* carped that 'he even does a better impersonation of Anthony Newley than Sammy Davis did.' Robert Gore-Langton for the *Daily Telegraph* chose easier targets: 'His voice is now a warble and his famous grin has become an obscene leer. Newley's enormous eyebrows provide a side-show of their own, writhing about his forehead like a pair of ferrets.' And the *Daily Mail's* Jack Tinker excelled himself in caustic comment: 'Mr Newley's fabled vibrato is now so tremulous it is as if he were shaking hands with his own larynx. His appearance has taken on a hunched, even grotesque, gnomonic quality. Here he is cavorting about on a tiny stage in the back room of an Islington pub in some desperate personal attempt to re-establish his old love affair with an audience.'

Newley was bewildered as to how he could attract such seeming hatred amongst the reviewers. For £270 a week he had put himself through hell, working in 'a dump', hanging his clothes on a nail in the wall. And for what? Was this some sort of payment he had to make? Was there something to be learnt from such a soul-destroying experience? Hadn't the failure of *Stop the World* been enough for him to bear? Newley struggled through the three-week run, wrapping himself up against the cold of late winter and drinking greasy soup in a cafe next to the theatre. This then was Newley's nadir.

Newley and Gracie sold the house on the Palisades. There didn't seem much to stay in London for, but there was even less cause to return to America. They found and bought a small but comfortable home in Esher some fifteen miles south west of London. It was a far cry from the Hollywood mansions but at least they now had a home.

They flew to Los Angeles two days after Newley finished at the King's Head. They packed up their belongings, decided on what they wanted and could afford to ship back to England, sent another batch of correspondence to Boston University and then held a yard sale to get rid of the remaining furniture and clothes. Newley was not sentimental in sorting through his possessions. Out went the Christmas decorations, his tuxedos, Shelby's handmade dolls' house and the cradle that he and Dareth had shipped back from England after *GOBOD*. Dareth was saddened. 'I wanted those things,' she said. 'They had only been stored there because we didn't have room at our house but he just gave everything away. He wasn't attached to anything material but he kept every note that the children had ever written.' Billy Bones helped with the packing and organisation of the sale, revising Newley's wildly unrealistic prices on the items. Bones knew that Newley wanted to

make a clean break: 'It was going to be a new beginning.' Judy Bryer and Joan came and selected a few things while Judy's husband Max watched the neighbours picking over the bric-a-brac of Newley's life, each chair, trinket or memory being sold for a few cents.

Newley went home to Esher devoid of any ideas for the future.

†

As the months passed, Newley played a bumbling detective to great effect in ITV's *Gone To Seed*, questioning the likes of Peter Cook, Jim Broadbent and Alison Steadman. He had been working on a new musical treatment of Shakespeare's *Richard III* which he and Mike McKenzie referred to as *Hump!* Newley, naturally, would play the title role. Bill Kenwright tempted him with various projects including Peter Hall's production of *Waiting For Godot*. Newley nibbled at the bait but eventually declined. Several years later he also turned down Bob Carlton's eager invitation for him to play Archie in John Osborne's *The Entertainer* at the Queen's Theatre in Hornchurch. Newley professed to not liking the play; however, Peter Charlesworth thought Newley had got cold feet and that he no longer felt up to dealing with a role of such magnitude. Either way the opportunity would surely have proved a fascinating and rewarding union of the actor and the role.

In the summer of '92, Newley was thrown a lifeline by Leslie Bricusse. Graham Mulvein, a producer working for the Barry Clayman Organisation, was intent on producing a stage version of the movie *Scrooge* as a Christmas show for Birmingham's Alexandra Theatre. Bricusse had adapted his original screenplay, adding six new songs in the process. It was Mulvein's musical supervisor Peter Benda who suggested Newley for the role, matching Bricusse's own thoughts on the subject, though neither were aware of Newley's dire need for some artistic succour (not to mention cash). Newley's first reaction, as ever, was to say no. He didn't want to go back on the boards eight times a week in some provincial theatre and in something that was not his own. PC prevailed upon his friend to think again. He knew that it was imperative for Newley to work before he grew completely stale and that to gain some credibility in the business his client simply had to appear in a piece which he had neither written nor directed. And after all they were willing to pay him £15,000 a week for a six-week run. For the first time since *Cranks* some thirty-five years earlier, Newley accepted a role on stage as an actor and as an actor only.

Bob Tomson was a director Newley felt he could listen to and work with. He 'banned' Newley's quavering vibrato, considering it 'a caricature' of the singer's real voice. Newley responded by developing a more resonant, darker

tone to his voice. Tomson also challenged the actor's tendency to remove himself whenever a problem arose during rehearsals. On one occasion Tony put up a familiar barrier between himself and the director, saying, 'I'm not certain, actually, that Newley would be comfortable with this.'

Tomson responded gently: 'Yes, but what do *you* think?'

The director's ongoing concern was that Newley found it more comfortable to play Ebenezer Scrooge as a loveable scoundrel from the beginning of the show, leaving no room for the character's journey towards his ultimate redemption. Tomson insisted that if Tony were to do service to Dickens' creation then his Scrooge must at the outset be a monster – a cruel, cold, lifeless, loveless husk of inhumanity. Newley welcomed Bob's notes during rehearsals and even during the run demanded that Tomson post his lengthy comments on the dressing room mirror to be mulled over and ticked off as the actor prepared for the show. Tomson admired Newley's tireless pursuit of the eponymous curmudgeon.

When the show finally opened on 9 November, Newley's performance was remarkable: 'He tore the place to pieces,' recalled P C, 'and he didn't remember half of it!' The show sold out throughout the run. Newley was relieved; at last he had had some good fortune. Confidence returning, he said to one newspaper, 'I'm coming back because I want to get back to the roots of acting, this is a very important time in my career.'

The poignancy of Bricusse and Dickens combining to effect his salvation did not escape Newley: 'It feels as though I have been preparing for this role all my life.' To Bricusse he said, 'You always come along at the right time in my life.' Bricusse paid his own tribute when Newley was the subject that December of Thames Television's *This Is Your Life*. During the celebration of his friend's life and work, Bricusse remarked that Newley was one of the true musical theatre stars and that *Scrooge* had brought Newley back to the musical stage where he belonged.

The show's score was littered with lyrics that seemed to echo Newley's own personal journey. 'A Better Life' asked the question: 'Can I find a better life and learn to live it well?' But Scrooge's anthem reaffirming his will to change could not be more apposite:

I'll begin again, I will change my fate,
I will show the world that it is not too late.
I will never stop, while I still have time,
Till I stand at the top of the mountain I must climb.

Buoyed by talk of another tour the following winter and a possible West End transfer, Newley returned to Esher and his mother. In a letter to Tink he wrote:

My beloved Grace has given me such a nurturing atmosphere at home these last five years. I feel as though I've been allowed a second childhood – and that any moment now I'll be able to go out into the world as a real adult. We've a small house and money in the bank. I'm not sure I want fame. Except...

Write soon,

Always T

He concentrated on his writing and especially on *Richard III*, convinced that it would one day afford him the chance to star in a vehicle of his own creation. He sent the first draft to PC for his opinion. The agent thought it 'nonsense' and in no fit state to send out to producers. Newley was disheartened but continued to work at the piece. He was also in talks with various producers about reviving the character of Gurney Slade in a new TV series called *The Librarian*. The idea never took off.

That summer brought him a guest role in Central TV's version of the American sitcom *Who's the Boss?* In *The Upper Hand*, Newley played a petty criminal, a sort of grown-up Artful Dodger, chasing the affections of Honor Blackman. She was astonished to hear that he was playing the role, as the two hadn't seen each other since *A Boy, a Girl and a Bike*. She thought casting him as Nick was perfect as 'he looked like he had just come out of jail and he excelled in playing people you wouldn't trust. He made me laugh.'

The producer Chris Walker was surprised and thrilled to have him on board, as was Blake Hunter, one of the original American writers. Walker thought him 'a great asset to the show', and his appearance was hugely appreciated by the studio audience. So successful was Newley's presence in the first episode that Nick was written into a further three episodes during the show's run. Only the production accountant was ignorant as to quite who Anthony Newley was. One day the twenty-four-year-old asked Walker who Tony Nearly was and why a car had been provided for him?

Newley's deal with Polygram to make an album that year fell through. He had been pushed aside by the company in favour of another artist. An independent record producer Kenny Denton (a one-time technician at CBS where the *Quilp* soundtrack had been recorded) offered to make the record at his own studios. Newley accepted and they put together a list of old and new songs for the album. Titled *Too Much Woman*, the disc included Newley and his daughter Tara singing a disappointing soft jazz version of 'Why?' and a rendition of 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' in the original key. Denton had had the backing tracks arranged and recorded before Newley came to the studio and was therefore disturbed to hear Newley explain that he could no longer

sing the song in such a high key. Kenny refused to be thwarted. He asked Newley to have a go at singing the number, which he did. Denton sat back and listened to the strangled sounds coming through the speakers. As Newley finished, Kenny gushed, 'It's fabulous Tony, let's try it once more.' Newley was not persuaded by the producer's enthusiasm but gave it another shot and this time there was a marked improvement. Kenny encouraged him again: 'Tony, this is fabulous, really good. I'm enjoying it, aren't you? Let's do it one more time.' Newley started to share the producer's 'excitement' and sang his heart out. Denton got his track.

Before *Scrooge* began again in the early autumn Newley went to see Annie Ross in cabaret at Pizza on the Park. The two talked after the show and eventually Newley asked about their old friend, Gina Fratini. Ross said that she was well and that she had given up her dress design business and had moved away from London. The next morning Annie called Gina and told her about seeing Tony, suggesting that he still seemed to be very fond of her. Ross added, 'I don't think he is at all a happy man. I think he's jaded and disillusioned with life and living with his mother in Esher. Give him a ring: he'd love to hear from you.'

Gina, who was in the process of moving back to the capital, said she'd have to think about it. The mention of Tony's name had quite unsettled her: she felt as if there were a box inside her that was 'all Tony Newley'. It had always been there – even through her three marriages she had never quite forgotten him, nor how much their relationship had meant all those years earlier. For six weeks Gina wrestled with her desire to speak to him and her feeling that it all seemed rather sad trying to recapture something that had happened so long ago. Then one morning Gina thought, 'Hold on, I'm sixty, what the hell am I doing?' She called Tony straightaway. A few days later she drove to Esher. She and Tony had tea together and at once there was an easiness between them. As Gina was leaving Tony said, 'Please come back and see us.' The 'us' was not lost on Gina: she realised there and then that if their friendship were to develop then it would do so only with the approval of Gracie.

The 1993–4 tour of *Scrooge* lasted some seven months, ending with an extended stay in Oxford for the Christmas holiday. Bob Tomson and the production team re-rehearsed the show but then went to Australia for several months to mount a new production starring Keith Michel. When the director returned, riding high on the Australian experience and bursting with new ideas that had sprung from the antipodean staging, *Scrooge* had already settled into its six-week run in Oxford. News had got back to the British company of the success of the Australian production and of how Keith Michel had been nominated for Best Actor award for his portrayal of Scrooge (an award he later won). Tomson saw the Oxford show and, in his usual fashion, faxed nine

pages packed with notes to Newley. Although the tone of the fax was friendly, Tomson pulled few punches. Commenting on one of Scrooge's songs, he wrote:

Honestly, the number when it was stiller, darker and shorn of all its current confidence of gestures and action was – and I'm not bullshitting – a masterclass of economy and emotional truth. You made this number memorable. Now it's becoming part of your cabaret repertoire. Please give it back its true dramatic importance and uniqueness.

Newley read the fax and wondered how this man, who had been away from the show for the majority of its run, could feel that he had the right to walk back into the company, pick holes in his performance and demand changes to be made to the script and the blocking – now, in January, with only a month to go before the show closed! He agreed to meet Tomson two days later. Tomson outlined to him some thoughts about re-staging parts of the show and the inclusion of a better magic trick for Scrooge and one of the ghosts. Expecting to find Newley as amenable and interested as he was during the rehearsal period, Tomson was surprised when Newley raised his tired eyes and stated, 'I am not going to rehearse this again. I am not going to rehearse this with you again. I've done enough on it. I'm not going to change another thing. I don't care what you've all found in Australia, I'm not interested.'

Tomson described their falling-out as total and immediate. The director wondered whether Tony had felt outmanoeuvred or undermined in some way but he would never know as Newley refused to have anything further to do with him. Tomson recalled, 'I never heard another word from him. I tried everything to reconstruct that working relationship. I sent him long faxes, phone messages, messages via Graham and Leslie. Everyone was baffled by how intense the silence was.' He never met Tony again after that meeting.

Newley had not enjoyed the tour. At his age he resented having to work so hard and he was not sure even that he liked the show. He had never cared for being backstage in the darkness and he now found the venues depressing. He hated being on the road too and rather than taking lodgings in Oxford, he chose instead to make the 126-mile round trip in the ever-present chauffeured car from his home to the theatre each day. Consequently his life was wholly consumed by the show. As Shelby recalled, 'He didn't have a life outside. He practically bought a taxi service in Esher. He would go home and there would be food on the table, and he would sleep and get up and there was food on the table, and he would read a paper and then do it all again. He was a prostitute for the money. He didn't want to do it anymore. He wanted to get back but on his own terms – no longer be the puppet. He didn't want to do anything for other people again.'

For all its artistic success, the Australian production had been a financial disaster. Most of the production team were owed sizeable fees that they were asked to waive in order to keep the British production afloat. Bricusse had brought in Deek Arlon, another producer, to oversee Mulvein but the two failed to get on from day one. By the end of the Oxford season, Bricusse and Tomson had not been able to secure a West End theatre for the following winter and indeed it looked as though *Scrooge – the Musical* had come to its natural end. Bricusse then discovered that Mulvein was intending to write his own version of *A Christmas Carol* and that Newley was to provide the score. Bricusse was livid; he called Mulvein who said that Newley was indeed set on working with him on a new show. Incredulous, Bricusse called Newley and asked his friend if what Mulvein had said was true. Newley replied, 'Well Brickman, I've got to take care of myself,' and added, 'Without me you won't have a production.' Bricusse could not comprehend Newley's attitude – his lack of loyalty. 'That ended our relationship for a while,' he recalled. 'I was so pissed off that I didn't talk to Newley for about a year.' What Bricusse couldn't see was the smouldering resentment that Newley felt towards him. It was true that Leslie always seemed to turn up when Newley needed him most and that rankled. Newley didn't want what Bricusse had – the houses, the money, the life – and yet the alternative was depressing. It seemed to Tony that everything he had tried to do alone had failed whereas when he touched Bricusse, gold fell into his hands. Was he really nothing without him?

As soon as the Oxford tour had ended, Newley flew to Miami for a number of cabaret engagements in the Century Village retirement resorts, followed by a trip to Barbados with his son, Christopher. His departure from Esher coincided with Gracie being diagnosed with breast cancer. Since he could not cancel his trip, Gina stepped in to help. For the two months that Newley was away, she accompanied the ninety-two-year-old lady to the hospital for her course of chemotherapy and by the time Newley returned, she and Gracie had become close friends. Tony and Gina began to spend a lot of time together. He would go to her house to write and the two would walk out in the afternoons. 'It all just fell into place,' Gina recalled. 'Everything that happened to us was meant to push us together. He needed a good, dear friend. It was very comfortable, we were right together. Perfect.'

Remembering their time together in the fifties, Tony later said to her, 'How did I not realise then that you were the right person to be with?'

'Because I wasn't the right person,' Gina replied. 'You had to go through all the other stuff. What would have been tragic, was that if we had got it together then, we wouldn't be together at our age now. If we had to choose?'

Newley smiled. 'God has been so patient with us, hasn't he?'

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

LOVE HAS THE LONGEST MEMORY

BRICUSSE AND TOMSON BROKERED A DEAL with Apollo Leisure to take over the production of *Scrooge* with or without Newley. Another tour was planned, this time to end in Manchester for Christmas 1994, and efforts were still being made to take the show into London. Despite the falling out, Bricusse was keen to have Newley back on board: he did, after all, consider him the best Scrooge on the planet. He resolved to put aside the bad humour between them and offered Newley the role. Newley agreed reluctantly and on one condition – that Bob Tomson must be replaced. On no account would he come back should Tomson in any way be involved. Apollo agreed even though Tomson would continue to receive his fee and a percentage from the box office. Tudor Davies, having already replaced the original choreographer Anthony Lapsley the previous year, moved into Tomson's place.

So once again Newley took to the road, but this time he was accompanied by Gracie. He kept himself to himself and rarely socialised with any of the cast. On stage his performance had matured, although he was always ready to have some fun and thought nothing of breaking out of character should some slight mishap occur during the show. Then he would look at the audience and go into an extended ad lib while his fellow actors would wait, usually in fits of giggles, until Newley groped his way back to the script. On stage and off he was a generous actor, forever encouraging younger members of the cast to 'do more' or to 'take the stage' when he felt it was their moment.

Bricusse visited *Scrooge* in Bournemouth, where he and Newley healed the rift. Brickman had begun to realise that their relationship had never really moved forward from the 1960s and '70s: 'We were kind of revivals ourselves every time we got together again,' he thought. And like most revivals much of the original magic had been lost.

Shelby joined her father on the tour, working as a dresser and then in the sound department. She saw how exhausted Newley was and how his childlike love of Christmas had all but left him. 'Christmases were so depressing,' she recalled. 'In Manchester, I strung popcorn up on string and made a meal for him and Grandma. He came downstairs in his pyjamas, ate and then went back upstairs to bed. There were no presents, there was no fanfare. He was like that for years. He was Scrooge, not mean, but that was his persona. The

spirit of Christmas went right down the toilet. There was nothing, zero, bleh! And we couldn't rouse him out of his mood.'

Newley's depression was severe. During the rehearsal period for the tour, Gina found him sitting in his darkened bedroom one day.

'If I could find an easy way of switching off the light I would,' he uttered vacantly.

'How could you do that to your children? Can you imagine what you would be leaving behind? The tragedy, the heartbreak,' Gina reasoned gently.

Newley said desperately, 'It is beyond all thinking, I can't even think about that. I cannot explain it to you.'

Once the tour had finished Newley tapped into his own mythical Jewish ancestry to play Tevye in a live recording of *Fiddler on the Roof*, a role that he was well suited for and which he delivered with exquisite aplomb. He then returned to the States to see Christopher and for a run of cabaret engagements including a reunion on stage at Westbury with his oldest American buddy, Alan King.

His summer was sabotaged by an emergency appendicitis (the endoscopically filmed video of which he added to his extensive collection of his own movie and TV appearances). Newley's social life was limited to Saturday evenings with Mike Atkins and the occasional pie and mash takeaway with Kenny Denton. Kenny once asked Tony whether Gina would like a portion. Newley replied with a twinkle in his eye, 'I don't think Gina is a pie and mash girl.'

On another occasion Newley wanted to treat Gracie to a night out and asked Kenny and his wife Susie to join them. The Dentons collected Tony, Gina and 'the Duchess' and Tony directed the way to a restaurant he knew. Expecting a bijou establishment favoured by celebrity diners seeking privacy the Dentons were surprised and amused to find Newley's 'restaurant' to be a fish and chip shop. The five of them went through to the cafe area and seated themselves on the plastic chairs, whereupon Gracie loudly ordered a Harvey Wallbanger but had to settle for a coke. The next day Newley called Kenny to see if he and Susie had enjoyed their fish supper. Kenny said of course they had but couldn't help mentioning that Susie was a little taken aback at the choice of venue. Newley chuckled: 'I think Susie thinks I'm a bit classier than I am.'

The winter months passed by with Newley playing Scrooge, this time in Bristol, Apollo having failed again to find a suitable London theatre. Newley was now finding it physically difficult to get through the show. His knees, on which he spent half the performance, were constantly painful and he was beginning to think that this would be his last tour. The money was welcome but the misery of performing, coupled with his considerable discomfort, dispelled any vestige of enjoyment the role had once brought.

A month-long run at the Rainbow and Stars cabaret room in New York the following May saw a different Newley altogether. Here was the veteran crooner, restrained and sophisticated, the bitterness gone, replaced by a gentle self-mockery. A man of experience, world-weary but comfortable in himself. There was a new vitality there too. It was a consummate performance. 'What a thrill! Everything he does exhilarates, entertains and enthralls. He should be doing it in a one man Broadway show. The most exciting phenomenon in town!' trumpeted the *Observer*. 'A consummate English music hall vaudevillian going through his paces, don't miss Anthony Newley,' urged the *Star Ledger* while *The Record* concluded, 'Inexplicable magic. The Candy Man Can and Does!' And Stephen Holden in the *New York Times* caught something of the mercurial quality of Newley's gifts: 'Enduring eloquence with theatrical brilliance. The undiminished power of eruptive talent.'

The laudatory reviews and the enthusiastic response from the packed houses each night bolstered Newley's confidence. He returned to London for a three-week run at the Cafe Royal's Green Room where once again he impressed both critics and public alike. Tony Patrick in *The Times* wrote:

Like all great entertainers, Newley is a skilled dissembler. He appears out of control, harangues his pianist, clambers awkwardly on and off the piano top, changes his running order and occasionally loses the plot, but every gesture, exclamation and expression has been calculated, its effect accurately gauged. After forty years, including a decade and a half as one of America's top cabaret attractions, this is a class act. When Newley is on stage, you pay attention.

Newley didn't trust the critics; why should he? But he too noticed a change in his act and for the first time in his career he was connecting with and enjoying his audience. Perhaps this was the vehicle that he had been looking for. There was good news also from Apollo Leisure. *Scrooge* was to open the following November at the Dominion Theatre for a three-month Christmas season in the West End. With his name above the title, Newley would get another chance to conquer the London stage and put the role he had made his own to bed.

Newley's spirits lifted. At last he seemed to be pulling together the disparate elements of his life. His career was picking up, he had money in the bank and he had reconciled his differences with Joan and Dareth. He was deeply involved in his children's lives (albeit via telephone for Sacha and Christopher) and, above all, in Gina he seemed to have found the one true love of his life. She was his friend; his love who cared for his every need, unconditionally, utterly. She was 'his angel'. In a letter to Tink he wrote about Gina: 'Like us she is twelve years old and like you she has the hands and mind of a Da Vinci! We've been friends for forty years.'

A week after the Green Room run, Newley felt a lump beneath the alabaster scar that trailed around the left-hand side of his body. He went to see his specialist. A secondary re-growth was found to have attached itself to the original scar tissue. Newley was offered a course of treatment or an immediate operation to remove the growth; he opted to have it removed. The operation took several hours and once again the tumour was found to be malignant. The surgeon removed the cancerous tissue, a section of Newley's spleen and two ribs. Newley was slow in recovering after the surgery and spent a number of days in intensive care. He was eventually discharged with an appointment for a CT scan the following January. Throughout the summer Newley recuperated in Esher, building his strength ahead of the London season of *Scrooge*.

The show was met with limp reviews, most of which damned the book and direction rather than the performers. On the whole Newley's performance was praised if, at times, begrudgingly so. His was not a triumphant return; he knew that. Indeed his portrayal of Scrooge had lost its edge, reverting to the loveable rogue that he had assiduously avoided during the previous tours. He didn't care about the reviews; he was tired. It was a struggle just to get to the theatre let alone into his costume and onto the stage. The audiences were responsive however and, in recognition of his standing as an entertainer, Newley was invited to lead that year's Christmas parade through the West End. Gina decorated his dressing room with her own paintings and made it as comfortable and homely as possible. As a present for the first night, Bricusse compiled and published *The Leslie Bricusse & Anthony Newley Songbook* and had printed on the frontispiece the dedication:

For 'Newberg' –
 For all the songs –
 For all the years –
 For all the love –
 Thank you –
 'Brickman'

Newley had postponed his impending scan until the show had closed at the beginning of February. He attended the hospital hoping that, as in 1985, the cancer had been eradicated, and that he would be given a clean bill of health. To his utter dismay, the scan revealed multiple pulmonary metastases, pockets of cancer spattered like pepper shot across his lungs. The condition was inoperable.

Newley began chemotherapy within days. The double injections of beta interferon and interleukin had a drastic effect upon his health. One moment he had been treading the boards of the Dominion; now he could barely make

it across his bedroom to the bathroom. He found the treatment gruelling and demoralising: the migraines as the cytokines flooded his veins and the nausea that followed, compounded by the muscle-tearing vomiting that lasted through the night, were almost unbearable. So marked was his decline that after twelve weeks, he begged to be allowed to stop the therapy. However, he managed to stay the course and once the interleukin was withdrawn Newley rallied somewhat. The interferon injections were then reduced to three a week and although the weariness and nausea remained, Newley began to tolerate the therapy.

Since the lung cancer had been diagnosed, Tony and Gina had started to look for practical ways to deal with the disease. He had always been fascinated by scientific research and now his interest was fuelled by a need to know more about his condition and the therapies available to aid his recovery. Newley also turned to Hazel McCulloch, a parent of one of Sacha's old school friends. She had often looked after Sacha at weekends when he was a boarder in England and was thought of fondly by Sacha and Tony alike. Hazel had successfully undergone chemotherapy for her own cancer in 1995 and was now a mine of information with regard to drugs, complementary medicines and various diets. She was also a 'hand to hold' in Newley's darkest moments. The two began a correspondence and just as Sacha had written to her during her own illness, she now wrote to Tony: 'Keep the faith.' Newley himself encouraged many patients at the Cancer Centre where he would sit and chat to others about his own illness and how he was coping with the disease. One patient, a postman from Wales, gave Tony cause for hope as he had been cured by a similar treatment and Tony would make occasional telephone calls to Swansea when his own courage was failing.

Newley went back to work. His cabaret engagements were infrequent but paid the bills and he continued to write, turning his attention to another draft – the third in eleven years – of *Richard III*. In the summer of '97 he and Gina visited Los Angeles where he was appearing in concert at the Northridge College campus theatre. Dick Martin, Bob Newhart, Judy and Max Bryer, Dorothy Ohman and Billy Bones, amongst others, came to see the show. Newley was touched by the effort they had made and was genuinely pleased to be surrounded by his old friends but did not want to socialise. He was happy just to get back to the Carothers' house where he and Gina were guests.

'Our time together when he came to stay was very intense,' A J recalled. 'He wanted to be with us; this was where he felt safe. He didn't want us to bring the world to him and he didn't want to go out into it. It didn't seem to matter to him. He was an old shoe with us and that seemed to be what he wanted to be. He just wanted to relax with people he didn't have to prove anything to.'

Later that year Newley accepted the role of Toddy in the American tour of Bricusse and Henry Mancini's Broadway musical *Victor/Victoria*. He flew to Houston to begin rehearsals but was admitted into hospital on arrival suffering from exhaustion and after only five days bowed out of the show due to ill health. He didn't miss much. Raquel Welch had limited success in the title role and the director Blake Edwards had no time for her whatsoever: 'Blake was hideous to her,' thought Bricusse, remembering a meeting when Edwards stormed into the office 'in a very bad mood and said to her, "Well you're certainly not Julie Andrews. You can't sing; you can't dance; you can't act; so I'm going to let the stage manager sort it out."' Welch had a huge following, however, that required mounted police to control the crowds that gathered each night outside the stage door. 'There were two thousand people waiting for her,' Bricusse commented. 'If they'd all come inside at eight o'clock we'd still be running.'

Six months passed and Newley's health stabilised. With continual therapy the cancer seemed to have been held at bay. Tony's return, in February, to The Green Room (now run by Bill Kenwright and his brother Tom), exceeded all expectations. His became the first and only act throughout the Kenwrights' control of the venue to break even: no little achievement in the renowned loss-making room. Newley's six-week extended engagement sold out and attracted an extraordinary array of celebrities and friends. The approval of his peers that Newley so needed throughout his career was now lavished upon him each and every night around the tables before him. Frequently he would return to the small stage after a performance and chat with the audience about his experiences in America and as a young actor in England.

One evening during the last week of the run Newley was delighted to hear that Frankie Vaughan was to be in the audience. Towards the end of his act he introduced the famed singer to the room. The audience went wild and Vaughan made his way to the stage. It so happened that Newley's MD, Colin Keyes, also played and conducted for Vaughan, so with some confidence Newley asked, 'What shall we do?'

Frankie suggested the title song from *The Good Old Bad Old Days* which he had used in his act for several years. He led the way and the two batted the lyrics to and fro between them. 'The roof came off,' PC said, remembering the audience's reaction. As Vaughan made his way back to his seat Newley appeared to be in a state of shock and said, 'That sort of thing only happens in the movies.'

Newley had long treasured the notion of working with Herbert Kretzmer again and it was Kretzmer who approached Tony with an idea for a musical about the private and public lives of a male couple in showbiz such as Morecambe and Wise, the Two Ronnies or Hancock and Sid James. Newley

jumped at the idea and suggested they might re-use some of their vaudeville-flavoured songs from *Heironymus*. Kretzmer's suggestion filled a gap for Tony as, after twelve years' work on the project, he had finally given up on his beloved *Richard III* musical. The eight producers to whom he had sent the scripts and demos had all rejected the piece. Bill Kenwright had agreed to discuss it at a later date although he too had been unimpressed by the book: '*Richard III* just wasn't good enough. It was obvious and over the top.' However, Kenwright would never have contemplated actually telling his boyhood idol that he didn't like it. 'I wasn't a close friend. I didn't know him even but I worshipped him. I was absolutely in awe of him.'

Dick Vosburgh and Peter Vincent were invited to write the book for the new Kretzmer/Newley project but it foundered within weeks when the team was not able to agree on the structure, or direction of the piece. Newley made it plain that he expected to direct the show. This was also a sticking point. Kretzmer recalled, 'None of us were sure that this was the way to go; Tony was hooked into a certain kind of direction and it may have been that we needed a fresh, American mind to bring something totally new to it.' It was clear however to Kretzmer, Vosburgh and Vincent that Tony would not have responded well to anyone else directing. 'And this was before a single note was written,' Kretzmer observed.

Vosburgh saw a youthful excitement in Tony during the meetings but was also aware for the first time in their friendship of 'the steel' behind the smile: 'We did the show to keep him busy as he felt he wasn't strong enough to work much. The first couple of meetings were absolutely joyous, it was the last meeting that wasn't. It turned out that Herbie and Tony weren't writing the same show. We weren't even talking about a comedy team anymore. Newley wanted an episodic show which meant that three generations would pass before your eyes and I militantly didn't. I felt it wasn't necessary to make it an Edna Ferber chronicle and neither did Herbie. Newley got quite angry. He was a little angry with Peter as well. We decided to think it over.'

Gina and Newley visited Atlantic City for a run of concerts in the summer and then returned to London and an invitation from his old friend, Gillian Lynne for him to write the book and songs for Lynne's 1999 Christmas production of *Dick Whittington* at the Sadler's Wells Theatre in London. PC also informed Tony that he had landed a role in the BBC's hit soap opera, *EastEnders*. The soap had revitalised many a sagging career especially amongst the older members of the cast and Newley placed a great deal of hope in the possibility that it might do the same for him. If the media interest was anything to go by, his arrival in the living rooms of half the nation would make quite a splash. Tony remarked, 'I can't believe it - there are newspaper reporters knocking at the door. It's extraordinary - it's fantastic but extraordinary.'

The anticipation outshone the experience. Newley's stereotypical second-hand car dealer had little to do other than look shifty and sell cars: another likeable rogue to portray while trying to breathe life into a deathly script. Vince Watson graced the series for just three episodes before accelerating off the screen for good. Whether it was the issue of his health that caused him to be written out was unknown to Newley but he was disappointed at having been axed after so few scenes. His ill health was certainly the reason for his reluctant withdrawal from *Dick Whittington* and the disappointment was felt by Gillie and Tony in equal measure.

Tony and Gina flew to Florida in the autumn to look for a house. They had been looking for a home outside London when the cancer had been diagnosed. The treatment and Tony's subsequent illness had curtailed any thoughts they had of moving from Esher. Now with the cancer's progress arrested they wanted somewhere of their own, with good medical facilities at hand and away from the British winters. They told Gracie that the doctors had recommended that Tony live in a more temperate climate, but in reality Tony wanted to be with Gina and Gina alone. The years of living with his mother had not been easy. His love for Gracie was unbounded: he readily acknowledged how grateful he was to her; and yet, conversely, he had never found it in himself to forgive her for abandoning him as a little boy or for bringing him into the world without a father. The continuing resentment he felt led him to wonder if his anger, bottled up for so many years, had been the cause of his cancer. What's more, at sixty-seven years old he didn't want to be living permanently with his mother in a house that he disliked on a road that led nowhere.

Whilst in Jensen Beach, Tony and Gina stayed in an apartment owned by Dareth on South Ocean Drive, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean on one side and the Indian River on the other. They failed to find a suitable house but were so taken with their lodgings that they bought an identical apartment in the same block. They signed the contracts one day before leaving for England. Newley didn't want to return to Esher but Gina insisted that they must go back to spend Christmas with Gracie.

In late October 1998, Newley joined the cast in Jimmy McGovern's hard-hitting TV drama *The Lakes*. Playing a manipulative Catholic bishop willing the married lover of one of his priests to abort their lovechild, Newley gave one of the most considered and understated performances of his career. The five-minute scene captured the essence of his talent, denuded of mannerism and gesture. He brought to the role a grandeur that its brevity would seem to have denied. It was a notable performance by an actor of great ability and it would be his last.

Newley went for a CT scan in November and at the follow-up appointment with his specialist, Professor Jonathan Waxman, was told that the cancer had

spread to his liver. There were few options left to halt the disease and now it was for Tony to decide whether to let nature take its course or to fight on. The consultant suggested that Tony might want to consider undergoing a course of experimental drug therapy which was being pioneered at a hospital in Bethesda outside Washington D C. There were no guarantees but... In a deep state of shock, Tony excused himself and left the room. While he was gone Gina asked Professor Waxman how long they had, should the treatment fail. Waxman looked across at Gina and, smiling sadly, he gently explained that doctors were always wrong and that he was unable to give an accurate estimate of the time that any of his patients had left. His slight words of hope were belied by his own evident sadness in knowing just how ill Tony was. Over the months he had grown fond of the actor and felt privileged to have looked after him.

Tony decided to go for the treatment and Waxman arranged for him to be accepted by Bethesda. He and Gina returned to Esher to tell the family. Tony said to Gracie, 'I haven't got cancer, the cancer has got me.' On 28 November he wrote to Hazel McCulloch:

Thank you for empathising with the continuous battle to keep up fading spirits in amazing rainstorms. This thing that links us, this thing inside is in some ways a blessing and everyday I try to figure out what it is.

Gina and Tony spent Christmas with Gracie, Tara and her husband and the couple's new-born daughter Miel and on 28 December they returned to their new home in Jensen Beach. Before he could begin the new therapy however, Newley had to detoxify his body for a month. The denial of the drugs that had kept him stable for over a year made him ill once again, but this was nothing compared with the devastating effect that the new drugs had on him once he began the treatment in February.

For seven weeks Tony made the fortnightly journey to Bethesda and endured a living hell. Unable to eat or sleep and with continual vomiting, his weight halved. Gina cared for him unsparingly. Tony tried not to complain and told her, 'You know I love you and please don't forget if I don't tell you one day.' Dareth proved an invaluable help and comfort to both Tony and Gina and every weekend Christopher visited his father. The two sat and talked for hours: 'We resolved a lot of the issues about him leaving,' Chris said. 'I was glad to have him around all the time but at the same time it was difficult, seeing him deteriorate. Watching him go through all those rites, getting everything straight in his head, it brought a lot of things together for me. It answered a lot of questions.'

Shelby visited each month and on one trip some six weeks into the treatment, she and her father went for a walk along the beach. Looking at the

STOP THE WORLD

crumpled figure in the wheelchair, Shelby became sharply aware of her father's misery. She turned to the man she so dearly loved and whispered suddenly, 'Dad, please. You don't have to do this for any of us. You don't have to fight. If you want to go, go. We love you and we support you.'

Tony said to her, 'You're the only one who has been brave enough to say that to me. You must love me very much.'

'With all my heart,' his daughter cried. 'You deserve to go with dignity and the pride that you have had throughout your life.'

A week later Newley was informed that the treatment had been ineffective and that the cancer in his liver had grown. He ceased the therapy and his oncologist immediately prescribed the cocktail of drugs that offered some respite from the nausea and retching. Newley also made the decision to bring in hospice help to administer his drugs and care for him as much for Gina's relief as for his own.

Throughout his ordeal, amazingly, Newley continued to correspond with friends, never letting a card's arrival go by without a response. On 31 March he wrote to Herman Raucher:

Dearest Herm,

Your letters are grand and full of kind tempest and remembrance. All I can think of is the time we wasted...time we wasted...time we wasted.

I love you all and by some way or another you will know about our continuing saga.

Love,

Newberg

With the return to his original medication, a semblance of normality returned to Newley's life. He could eat again, and short walks or outings in the car were once again possible. Peter Charlesworth sent him the recording of *The Lakes* which Tony duly watched. He was pleased and proud. He called his friend and said, 'I got it right, didn't I, Pete?'

Talking to Gina one night, Tony reflected on the irony of his situation: 'For the first time in my life, everything is right. I've got so much to live for. If I can get to the Millennium... I don't want to die, I really don't want to die.'

To alleviate his discomfort and stress, the nurses from the hospice administered tiny but regular injections of morphine which Newley called 'poppy'. 'He was very afraid to die and so the opium helped him find a real nice plateau,' Shelby recalled. 'He was constantly talking about being surrounded by warm spirits that were there at night.' Chris too saw a 'great calming light' come over his father.

Shelby also thought that the injections made him 'tremendous'. She took him shopping – Tony dressed in flowery shirts, white knee socks and sandals. 'He was so amused by everything around him,' Shelby remembered. 'He was quite high. We giggled a lot.' Together they belatedly celebrated Shelby's birthday with a meal at the apartment. 'What shall I wear?' asked Shelby.

'Something that makes you feel gorgeous,' Newley replied.

Shelby found a little black dress and a pair of shoes with 'heels that were way too high'. Her father couldn't have been more tickled.

Towards the end, Newley was visited by Billy Bones who brought him spaghetti to remind him of the pasta parties they had enjoyed on the road. Bones was distraught to see Tony in such a bad way: 'It pissed me off that somebody who took such care of himself...it just didn't seem fair. He had finally found someone who was good for him too.'

Ian Fraser also went to Florida to say goodbye to his old friend. For three days he sat with Newley, holding his hand as they talked. 'There was a closeness that I had never felt before,' Fraser thought, 'and when we reminisced we truly touched each other. I felt I got to know a man that I hadn't really known. When I think of all the things we did together over forty years, those three days probably left the most lasting impression. I'd grown as a person and maybe I had to reach that stage to appreciate what he was. There was a part of him, a true vulnerability about the person that wasn't covered up by talking about it or singing about it. There was a realness about the man that he hadn't exposed to me before.'

Gracie travelled to Florida but after only a few days her own ill health forced her return to England. Sacha came and Tara brought Miel from Paris to see her Grandad. Standing at the door as they readied themselves to leave, Tony clung to his daughter. 'He didn't want to let me go,' Tara remembered. 'I literally had to pull away from him.' In her heart she knew she would not see her father again.

Tony asked Dareth to organise his funeral. Gina too decided to arrange her own future needs at the same time. So on Good Friday the 'lady with the coffins' came out to the apartment in order for Tony and Gina to choose a cask each. With Newley sitting in his boxing shorts and Hawaiian shirt, the meeting turned into a veritable party. Newley and Gina couldn't stop laughing as they sat looking through the brochure. Tony wanted a blue lining but Gina warned against velvet as it was 'too hot'. For herself, a cardboard coffin with white linen was what she wanted. In a new wall being built at the cemetery with views across a lake, they reserved adjacent sites so that, as Gina said, 'they could chat'. Dareth joined in the fun and, not to be left out, chose a coffin for herself. She then took photographs of Gina and Tony holding up pictures of their respective choices in the catalogue. 'We started laughing and

we laughed and laughed. It was hysterical,' Gina recalled. 'The woman didn't know what had hit her.'

Seated on the balcony with Dareth one evening, Tony pointed to the stars and said, 'Is that where I am going?'

Dareth replied, 'That's the north star and it's the closest one to heaven.'

Tony thought for a moment and then said, 'Well, I don't want to do it. I don't want to die but nobody else is going to do it for me.'

On the following Wednesday, Newley was admitted into hospital complaining of severe pain in his stomach. The liver had become massively enlarged, putting pressure on his other organs. He was now finding it difficult to breathe and could not escape the extreme discomfort that enveloped his body. He returned home on Sunday, knowing that it was now only a matter of time. Unable to rest, Newley wanted to get out of the flat. Gina took him for a drive on the Monday during which he tried to open the car door. 'What he wanted was to get out of his body,' Gina thought. 'He was confused.' The hospice increased the morphine and Newley was able to find some peace.

On the morning of Wednesday 14 April, Tony and Gina sat on the balcony and watched the sun slowly rise out of the Atlantic Ocean. Gina remembered almost wishing that he would die that day so that he would be released from the hell that he was in. Towards midday Newley fell asleep on the sofa holding Gina's hand. The nurse arrived early to give him his injection, telling Gina that they didn't want him to be uncomfortable anymore. At 3:20 pm Tony died. His last muttered words to Gina were typically Newleyesque: 'It's all a book, isn't it.'

EPILOGUE

WHAT A MAN!

THE FUNERAL OF ANTHONY NEWLEY took place three days later. Respecting Tony's wish, it was a simple affair attended by his family and a few close friends. Sacha wrote and delivered a eulogy and Leslie Bricusse gave his own tribute. The priest was an Irishman who had grown up in Hackney.

†

Lewis Gilbert said of Newley, 'Tony was kind of near genius. Your life is much more complicated when you have that kind of talent and you're bound to make some big mistakes.'

There was no reference book for Newley. Nothing in his childhood could have prepared him for the confusion of wonders that was his life. With no one person to guide him, he modelled himself as he went, packaging up and leaving behind the chapters of his life that he no longer required or wanted to be reminded of. He was what people wanted him to be. Perhaps by imitation he thought he would find himself, discover who he was and what he wanted. A cumulus of contradictions, Newley's life spilled into his compositions and stage persona. He inhabited his music because his music was him. 'Watching him perform was like entering a private space,' Sacha said. 'He was a master of "public solitude".'

Tony's eternal quest for self-knowledge was the defining quality of his work but it was also the element that stopped him from going on to do greater things. His lifelong attachment to the underdog, the little chap, the broken puppet and the tearful clown (sentiments that touched virtually every lyric he wrote and drove every musical phrase he composed) lent him a unique voice and yet undoubtedly restricted his own artistic development and his view of the cultural horizon. His naiveté allowed Newley to remain an innocent abroad; he was always at the beginning; he was always searching. Alan King said recently, 'I don't think Tony ever knew who or what he was. He had worked so hard and spent so much time becoming Anthony Newley that he got lost along the way.'

'The Genius of Anthony Newley'? Perhaps.

Unique? Most certainly.

STOP THE WORLD

But how should this extraordinarily talented man be remembered? As a singer? Actor? Writer? Composer? Director?

Tony himself was clear:

I think the most beautiful thing that can happen to anyone is to be remembered by their music. Music is pure love. To have your music played is to live again in the space of a few bars. So when I've had it they can forget everything else. Just write on my tombstone: He wrote good songs.

The End.

FILMOGRAPHY

Year	Title (Director)	Role
1947	<i>Dusty Bates</i> (Darrell Catling)	Actor
	<i>The Little Ballerina</i> (Lewis Gilbert)	Actor
	<i>Vice Versa</i> (Peter Ustinov)	Actor
1948	<i>Oliver Twist</i> (David Lean)	Actor
	<i>The Guinea Pig</i> (Roy Boulting)	Actor
	<i>Vote for Huggett</i> (Ken Annakin)	Actor
1949	<i>A Boy, a Girl and a Bike</i> (Ralph Smart)	Actor
	<i>Don't Ever Leave Me</i> (Arthur Crabtree)	Actor
	<i>Madeleine</i> (David Lean)	Actor
1950	<i>Highly Dangerous</i> (Roy Ward Baker)	Actor
1952	<i>Top of the Form</i> (John Paddy Carstairs)	Actor
	<i>Those People Next Door</i> (John Harlow)	Actor
1954	<i>Up to His Neck</i> (John Paddy Carstairs)	Actor
	<i>The Blue Peter</i> (Wolf Rilla)	Actor
1955	<i>Above Us the Waves</i> (Ralph Thomas)	Actor
	<i>Cockleshell Heroes</i> (Jose Ferrer)	Actor
1956	<i>The Good Companions</i> (J Lee Thompson)	Actor
	<i>Port Afrique</i> (Rudolph Mate)	Actor
	<i>X the Unknown</i> (Leslie Norman)	Actor
	<i>The Battle of the River Plate</i> (<i>The Pursuit of the Graf Spee</i>) (Powell & Pressburger)	Actor
	<i>The Last Man to Hang</i> (Terence Fisher)	Actor
1957	<i>How to Murder a Rich Uncle</i> (Nigel Patrick)	Actor
	<i>Fire Down Below</i> (Robert Parrish)	Actor
	<i>High Flight</i> (John Gilling)	Actor
	<i>Tank Force</i> (<i>No Time to Die</i>) (Terence Young)	Actor
1958	<i>The Man Inside</i> (John Gilling)	Actor
	<i>The Lady is a Square</i> (Herbert Wilcox)	Actor
	<i>The Heart of a Man</i> (Herbert Wilcox)	Actor
	<i>Sammy</i> (TV) (Ken Hughes)	Actor
	<i>The Bandit of Zhobe</i> (John Gilling)	Actor
1959	<i>Idle on Parade</i> (John Gilling)	Actor
	<i>The Killers of Kilimanjaro</i> (Richard Thorpe)	Actor
	<i>Jazz Boat</i> (Ken Hughes)	Actor
	<i>Let's Get Married</i> (Peter Graham Scott)	Actor
	<i>In the Nick</i> (Ken Hughes)	Actor
	<i>The Strange World of Gurney Slade</i> (TV) (Alan Tarrant)	Actor

STOP THE WORLD

- 1962 *The Small World of Sammy Lee* (Ken Hughes) Actor
- 1964 *Goldfinger* (Guy Hamilton) Lyricist (Title Song)
- 1966 *Stop The World - I Want to Get Off* (Philip Saville) Writer/Composer/Lyricist
- 1966/67 *Doctor Dolittle* (Richard Fleischer) Actor
- 1967/68 *Sweet November* (Robert Ellis Miller) Actor/Composer/Lyricist
- 1968 *Can Heironymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness?*
Director/Actor/Writer/Composer/Lyricist/Producer
- 1970 *Summertime* Director
Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (Mel Stuart) Composer/Lyricist
- 1974 *Mr Quilp (The Old Curiosity Shop)* (Michael Tuchner) Actor/Composer/
Lyricist
- 1975 *It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time* (TV) (John Trent) Actor
- 1978 *Sammy Stops the World* (Melvin Shapiro) Writer/Composer/Lyricist
- 1980 *Animal Talk* (TV) (Paul Asselin) Actor
- 1983 *Malibu* (TV) (E W Swackhammer) Actor
- 1985 *Blade in Hong Kong* (TV) (Reza S Bedayi) Actor
Alice in Wonderland (TV) (Harry Harris) Actor
- 1986 *Stagecoach* (TV) (Ted Post) Actor
Outrage! (TV) (Walter E Grauman) Actor
- 1987 *The Garbage Pail Kids* (Rodney Amateau) Actor
- 1988 *Boris and Natasha in Our Man Badenov* (TV) (Yves Simoneau) Actor
- 1990 *Three Coins in the Fountain* (TV) (Tony Wharmby) Actor
Polly Comin' Home (TV) (Debbie Allen) Actor

DISCOGRAPHY

Year	Title (CATALOGUE)	Highest chart position	Weeks on chart
1955	<i>Cranks</i> (CAST LP - HMV/UK 1082)		
1959	<i>Idle on Parade</i> (EP - DECCA/UK DFE6566)		
	<i>I've Waited So Long</i>	3	15
	<i>Idle on Parade</i>	13	4
	<i>Personality</i> (DECCA/UK F11142)	6	12
1960	<i>Why?</i> (DECCA/UK F11194)	1	17
	<i>Do You Mind?</i> (DECCA/UK F11220)	1	15
	<i>Love Is a Now and Then Thing</i> (LP - DECCA/UK LK4343)		
	<i>If She Should Come to You</i> (DECCA/UK F11254)	6	15
	<i>Strawberry Fair</i> (DECCA/UK F11295)	3	11
1961	<i>And the Heavens Cried</i> (DECCA/UK F11331)	6	12
	<i>Tony</i> (LP - DECCA/UK LK4406)		
	<i>Pop Goes the Weasel</i> (DECCA/UK F11362)	12	9
	<i>Stop the World - I Want to Get Off</i> (CAST LP - DECCA/UK SKL4142)		
1962	<i>D-Darling</i> (DECCA/UK F11419)	25	6
	<i>This is Tony Newley</i> (LP - LONDON/US LL3262)		
	<i>That Noise</i> (DECCA/UK F11486)	34	5
1963	<i>Fool Britannia</i> (LP - ACAPELLA)		
1964	<i>In My Solitude</i> (LP - RCA VICTOR LSP2925)		
1965	<i>The Roar of the Greasepaint - The Smell of the Crowd</i> (CAST LP - RCA VICTOR LSO1109)		
	<i>Who Can I Turn To?</i> (LP - RCA VICTOR LSP3347)		
1966	<i>The Genius of Anthony Newley</i> (LP - LONDON/US 361)		
	<i>Newley Delivered</i> (LP - DECCA/UK LK4654)		
	<i>Newley Recorded</i> (LP - RCA VICTOR RD7873)		
1967	<i>Doctor Dolittle</i> (ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK - TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX DTCS5101)		
	<i>Anthony Newley Sings the Songs from Doctor Dolittle</i> (LP - RCA VICTOR LSP3839)		
1968	<i>Sweet November</i> (WARNER BROS 7174)		
	<i>Can Heironymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness?</i> (ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK - KAPP KRS5509)		
1970	<i>For You</i> (LP - BELL 1101)		
1971	<i>Pure Imagination</i> (LP - MGM SE4781)		
1972	<i>The Good Old Bad Old Days</i> (CAST LP - EMI/UK EMA751)		
	<i>Ain't It Funny</i> (LP - MGM MV5096)		
1977	<i>The Singer and His Songs</i> (LP - UNITED ARTISTS LA718-G)		

STOP THE WORLD

- 1989 *What Kind of Fool Am I?* (FIRST NIGHT)
- 1992 *Scrooge - The Musical* (CAST LP - THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT 1194)
- 1993 *Too Much Woman* (LP - GNP/CRESCENDO 2243)
- 1994 *The Songs of Lionel Bart* (LP - MUSIC CLUB/UK 176)
- 1995 *Fiddler on the Roof* (LP - CARLTON/UK 30362)

Note

Chart positions etc. have been supplied where information is available

INDEX

- Above Us the Waves* [film], 44
 Abrahams, Mort, 123
Adamson of Africa see *The Killers of Kilimanjaro*
 Addis, Brian, 14, 22-3, 31, 34, 38
 Addis, Harry, 23
 Addis, Pamela, 14, 23, 31
 Addis, Peter, 23-4
 Addison, John, 46
Adventures of Dusty Bates, The [film], 29, 41
Alfred Marks Time [TV], 53
Alice in Wonderland [TV film], 197
 Allen, Debbie, 207
 Allen, Irving, 44-6, 50, 57-8, 60-1, 63-4, 67-9, 72-5, 77
 Allen, Irwin, 197-8
 Allen, Steve, 174
 Alpert, Herb, 124
 American Songwriters' Hall of Fame, The, 204
 Anderson, Loni, 207
 Andrews, Harry, 74
 Andrews, Julie, 163
 Annakin, Ken, 34
Anthony Newley Show, The [stage show], 75, 78, 83
 Antrobus, John, 64, 72
 Apollo Leisure, 221-3
 Arlon, Deek, 220
 Arnold, Grace, 59
Around the World in 80 Days [never completed musical], 185-6
 Ashton, Marcia, 46-7
Askey Galore [radio], 53
 Aslan, Gregoire, 68
 Astaire, Fred, 154, 176
 Atkins, Mike, 15, 211, 222
 Attenborough, Richard, 34
ATV Spectacular [TV], 77-8
 Aubrey, Anne, 15, 59-60, 62-9, 72-5

 Bacharach, Burt, 15, 163, 171, 176, 188, 198
 Bacon, Paul, 163
 Badrutt, Cappy, 104-5, 109
 Baker, Bertilla, 15, 208-9
 Baker, Jennifer, 85, 92, 95, 99, 102, 141
 Baker, Susan, 85, 92, 95, 99, 102, 141

Bandit of Zhobe, The [film], 62-3
 Barkas, Geoffrey, 28-9
 Barry Clayman Organisation, 215
 Barry, John, 110
 Bart, Lionel, 70, 73-4, 76, 85, 107, 109-10, 154
 Bass, Alfie, 30, 41
 Bassey, Shirley, 70, 110, 118, 154
Battle of the River Plate, The [film], 49
 Beatles, The, 9, 132, 204
 Bell, Edward, 195
 Benda, Peter, 15, 215
 Bendix, William, 64
 Bennett, Jill, 168
 Bennett, Tony, 118, 165, 171
 Bentley, Beverly, 55-6, 72
 Bergman, Ingmar, 78, 137
 Berle, Milton, 132, 137, 147
 Bernstein, Elmer, 168
 Bernstein, Leonard, 84
 Bijou Theatre, 54
 Black, Don, 14, 110
 Blackman, Honor, 15, 35, 217
 Blair, Joyce, 15, 72, 77, 85, 93
 Blair, Lionel, 15, 70, 72, 77, 85-6, 90
 Blakey, Art, 89
Blitz! [musical], 76
Blue Peter, The [film], 43
 Bochner, Lloyd, 15, 170
 Boddey, Martin, 64, 68
 Bones, Billy see Bill 'Bones' Vosburgh
 Booth, James, 72, 74
 Borge, Victor, 175
 Borgnine, Ernest, 197
Boris and Natasha in Our Man Badenov [TV film], 203
 Boston University Special Collections Department, 14, 120, 137, 214
 Boulting, Roy, 34
Boy, a Girl and a Bike, A [film], 35, 217
 Boyle, Katie, 92
 Bramble, Wilfred, 97
 Bren, Linda, 131
 Bren, Peter, 15, 131-3, 144
 Bresslaw, Bernard, 67
 Bricusse, Eve, 9, 11, 14, 71, 75, 80, 85, 99, 102, 131, 160, 204

STOP THE WORLD

- Bricusse, Leslie, 14, 48, 71, 75-6, 78-89, 91-2,
94-6, 99-101, 106-7, 109-15, 117-21, 123,
126-28, 130-1, 133, 135, 154-5, 158-160,
163-4, 168, 170-72, 182-84, 189, 193, 203-
4, 215-6, 220-1, 224, 226, 233
- Bridges, Beau, 198
- Broadbent, Jim, 215
- Broadcast Music Incorporated (BMI) Award,
92
- Broccoli, Cubby, 45-6, 50-1, 57-8, 61, 63-4,
67-9, 72-5, 77, 100, 110
- Broome, John, 85, 88
- Brown, James, 89
- Bryant, Hugh, 47, 54
- Bryer, Judy, 15, 215, 225
- Bryer, Max, 15, 215, 225
- Bryna Company, 153-4
- Buck, Ronnie, 131-3
- Bunn, Frank, 66
- Burchmore, Rhonda, 205
- Burns, George, 166
- Burton, Sybil, 106
- Buttons, Red, 197
- Byrne, Kiki, 85
- Caesar, Sid, 197
- Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas 122, 148-51, 156,
162, 168-9, 175-6
- Cahn, Sammy, 72, 91
- Campion, Gerald, 15, 41
- Can Heironymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy
Humppe and Find True Happiness?* [film],
136-49, 206, 227
- Candy, John, 170, 206
- 'Candy Man, The' [song], 154, 165, 177
- Carey, Mariah, 89
- Carlton, Bob, 215
- Carothers, A J, 15, 192, 195, 202, 206, 225
- Carothers, Caryl, 15, 195, 202, 225
- Carroll, Diahann, 148
- Carson, Johnny, 174-5
- Carstairs, John Paddy, 41, 43
- Cash, Johnny, 198
- CBS, 197, 207
- Chamberlain, Richard, 171
- Channing, Carol, 197
- Chaplin* [musical], 11, 188-94, 197-8, 208
- Chaplin, Charles, 40, 138, 165, 188-9
- Chappell, Edith, 23
- Charlesworth, Peter, 15, 70-1, 75, 86, 89, 203,
210, 212-3, 215-7, 226, 230
- Charley's Aunt* [play], 40
- Charlton, Richard, 54
- Cher, 174
- Christian, Linda, 93
- Churchill Theatre, Bromley, 204
- Clark, Petula, 15, 30, 33-5, 37, 150-1, 169-70,
174
- Coates, Eric, 59
- Coburn, Charles, 58
- Cockleshell Heroes* [film], 44-5, 50, 57-8, 64
- Coconut Grove Playhouse, 208
- Coe, Peter, 86
- Collins, Joan, 9, 14, 93, 95-103, 106-7, 109-11,
115, 117-9, 123-6, 130-1, 133, 135, 137,
141-2, 146-8, 151-2, 156, 159, 164, 180-1,
187, 210-11, 215, 223
- Coltrane, John, 89
- Comedy Awards, 174
- Como, Perry, 89, 118, 122
- Connery, Sean, 51, 124
- Conti, Ruth, 15, 27-9, 32-5, 40
- Conway, Tom, 49
- Cook, Peter, 95, 104, 215
- Cooke, Terry, 40, 53, 70, 83
- Cooper, Winifred, 14
- Coram, Joey, 23, 24
- Corbett, Ronnie, 15, 41
- Cornwell, Judy, 15, 138, 146, 153
- Coward, Noël, 13, 28, 89, 128, 150, 204, 210
- Cranko, John, 46-7, 51, 86
- Cranks* [revue], 46-8, 51, 53-5, 71, 86, 100, 161,
215
- Crawford, Joan, 181
- Cribbins, Bernard, 85
- Crowther, Leslie, 42
- Dahl, Roald, 154
- Damone, Vic, 99
- Dance Hall* [film], 37
- Darin, Bobby, 89, 118, 124
- David, Alan, 194
- Davidson, John, 174
- Davies, Tudor, 221
- Davis, Altovise, 15, 131, 152
- Davis Jr, Sammy, 11, 72, 90-2, 96, 99, 100, 106,
118, 124, 126, 131-2, 148, 150, 152, 154-5,
163, 165, 171, 173, 182-3, 186, 197
- Decca, 65, 69, 76, 91
- Delfont, Bernard, 79-80, 83-7, 89, 91, 101, 111,
114-5, 162-4, 185
- Denham, Maurice, 35

INDEX

- Dennis, Sandy, 130, 133-4
Denton, Kenny, 15, 217-8, 222
Desert Inn, 155, 200, 201
Dick Whittington [musical], 227-8
Doctor Dolittle [film], 10, 123-30, 148
Domingo, Placido, 89
Dominion Theatre, 11, 223
Don't Ever Leave Me [film], 35, 169
Donner, Dick, 131
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, LA, 190
Dors, Diana, 35-7, 39, 90, 136
Douglas, Kirk, 153
Douglas, Michael, 153-4
Douglas, Mike, 174
Duchess Theatre, London, 48
Dwyer, Leslie, 29
- EastEnders* [TV], 227
Ed Sullivan Show, The [TV], 54, 101
Edwards, Blake, 226
Eggar, Samantha, 15, 124-5, 128-30, 134
Ekberg, Anita, 60, 62-3
Elkins, Hillard, 183
Empire Theatre, Dewsbury, 40
Entertainer, The [play], 215
Evans, Bill, 89
Exton, Clive and Mara, 15, 51
- Factory, The, 131-3, 135
Fallana, Lola, 156
Fame [TV], 194
Farrow, Mia, 10, 124, 170-1
Fellowes, Julian, 15, 211-2
Felton, Earl, 68
Ferrer, Jose, 44-5, 58
Fiddler On The Roof [musical], 122, 222
- Films,**
Above Us the Waves, 44
Adventures of Dusty Bates, The, 29, 41
Bandit of Zhobe, The, 62-3
Battle of the River Plate, The, 49
Blue Peter, The, 43
Boy, a Girl and a Bike, A, 35, 217
Can Heironymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness?, 136-49, 206, 227
Cockleshell Heroes, 44-5, 50, 57-8, 64
Dance Hall, 37
Doctor Dolittle, 10, 123-30, 148
Don't Ever Leave Me, 35, 169
Fire Down Below, 58
Garbage Pail Kids, The, 200
Good Companions, The, 163
Guinea Pig, The, 34
Heart of a Man, The, 61
High Flight, 59
Highly Dangerous, 39
How to Murder a Rich Uncle, 58
Idle on Parade, 64, 66-9, 71
In the Nick, 74
It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time, 170
Jazz Boat, 71-3, 85
Killers of Kilimanjaro, The (Adamson of Africa), 68-9, 72
Lady is a Square, The, 60-1
Last Man to Hang, The, 49, 114
Let's Get Married / Confessions, 73-4
Little Ballerina, The [film], 29
Madeleine, 36
Man Inside, The, 60, 64
Mr Quilp, 168-70, 208, 217
Oliver Twist, 30-2, 34-5, 37, 39, 93, 207
Port Afrique, 48
Small World of Sammy Lee, The, 97-8, 101, 107
Summertree, 153-4
Sweet November, 10, 130, 133-4, 154
Tank Force, 60
Those People Next Door, 41
Top of the Form, 41
Up to His Neck, 43
Vice Versa, 30-3, 37, 43, 93, 169
Vote for Huggett, 34
Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, 10, 154, 165, 171
X the Unknown, 49
- Finch, Peter, 49
Fine, Sylvia, 171
Fire Down Below [film], 58
Fisher, Terence, 49
Fitzhugh, Ellen, 192
Fleischer, Richard, 126-9
Floggetts, The, 53
Fonteyn, Margot, 29, 47
Fool Britannia [comic album], 106
Forbes, Bryan, 15, 43, 57-8
Forsyth, Bruce, 15, 138, 146, 166
Fortescue, Kenneth, 59
Foster, Julia, 15, 97-8
Fowler, Harry, 41, 64, 66, 78-9
Franklyn, William, 15, 44, 51, 53, 69

STOP THE WORLD

- Fraser, Ian, 15, 76-7, 79, 81, 84-5, 88, 90-2, 95-6, 99, 103, 105-6, 112, 123, 126, 128, 131, 136, 145, 147-9, 154, 162-3, 167-8, 171, 174, 176-8, 182-3, 189, 191-3, 204, 231
- Fraser, Judith Morton (Judee), 15, 131, 167
- Fratini, Gina, 13, 14, 48, 50, 65-6, 218, 220, 222-4, 228, 231-2
- French, Jack, 176
- Fumed Oak* [TV], 211
- Gadian, Wendy, 15, 213
- Gainsborough Studios, 29
- Gallin, Sandy, 15, 158, 170, 173, 193
- Garbage Pail Kids, The* [film], 200
- Gardiner, Ron, 23-5, 31, 34, 117, 136, 156, 158, 162
- Gaye, Marvin, 89
- Geddes, Barbara Bel, 153
- Gilbert, Lewis, 15, 29, 32, 233
- Gilberto, Astrud, 89
- Gilling, John, 57, 60, 62, 64, 66, 68
- Gilmore, David, 15, 205
- Goddard, Willoughby, 113
- Godwin, Frank, 94
- 'Goldfinger'/*Goldfinger* [song/film], 10, 110, 117
- Gone to Seed* [TV], 215
- Good Companions, The* [film], 163
- Good Old Bad Old Days, The (GOBOD)* [musical], 10, 159-60, 162-6, 168, 170, 226
- Gorme, Eydie, 171, 197
- Gotlieb, Dr Howard, 14, 120-1
- Gough, Michael, 104, 108
- Gould, Elliot, 131, 136
- Goulet, Robert, 99
- Grade, Leslie, 70
- Gramalia, Rose, 15, 194, 202, 206
- Grammy Award, 99-100
- Green Room, The, 223-4, 226
- Green, Sid, 74
- Greene, Shecky, 175
- Greenfield, Howie, 173
- Gregson, John, 44, 49
- Grey, Beryl, 47
- Grey, Joel, 15, 101, 107
- Gribble, Bernard, 147
- Griffin, Merv, 174, 197
- Grossman, Herbert, 117
- Grossman, Larry, 192
- Guinea Pig, The* [film], 34
- Guinness, Alec, 15, 31
- Hackett, Buddy, 15, 157-9, 177
- Haigh, Kenneth, 15, 51-2, 53-4, 59
- Haley Jr, Jack, 124
- Halin, Kristin, 201-2, 206
- Hall, Peter, 64, 186, 215
- Hamlisch, Marvin, 175
- Hammersmith Palais, London, 70-1
- Hancock, Tony, 75, 90, 226
- Hannam, John, 15, 57, 74, 211-2
- Hannam, Wendy, 57, 74, 211-2
- Harewood, Dorian, 208
- Harrah's, 157
- Harris, Harry, 197
- Harrison, Kathleen, 34-5
- Harrison, Rex, 113, 120, 123, 125, 127-30
- Hart to Hart* [TV], 194
- Hasler, Colonel H G, 45
- Hayes, Isaac, 170
- Hayes, Patricia, 138, 146
- Hayworth, Rita, 59
- Heart of a Man, The* [film], 61
- Heath, Gordon, 46-7
- Heath, Ted, 72, 78
- Heller, Otto, 145
- Hellman, Jerome, 107
- Hemion, Dwight, 170
- Hemmings, David, 15, 124, 168-9
- Henderson, Florence, 171
- Henderson, Joe, 64, 72
- High Flight* [film], 59
- Highly Dangerous* [film], 39
- Hills, Dick, 74
- Hird, Thora, 35
- Holder, Geoffrey, 127
- Holiday, Judy, 101
- Hollywood Squares* [TV], 174
- Holt, Patrick, 35
- Hordern, Michael, 168
- How to Murder a Rich Uncle* [film], 58
- Howard, Trevor, 45
- HRH Princess Margaret, 47
- Hughes, Ken, 61, 72, 74, 94, 97-8
- Hume, Cyril, 68
- Hunter, Blake, 217
- Hurray for Mr Bulldyke* [uncompleted project], 150
- Hurry, Leslie, 114, 117-8
- Idle on Parade* [film], 64, 66-9, 71
- In the Nick* [film], 74

INDEX

- It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time* [film], 170
- It's a Musical World* [musical gala], 171-2
- Italia Conti Stage School, 27-30, 33, 35, 40-1, 62
- Ivor Novello Award, 48, 92, 166
- Jackson, Michael, 39
- Jackson, Milt, 89
- Jacobs, Arthur P (APJac), 107, 123, 125-7
- Jacobson, Nate, 122
- James, Sid, 64, 226
- Jazz Boat* [film], 71-3, 85
- Jefferies, Lionel, 15, 64, 66-7, 72-3, 113
- Jessel, George, 137
- Jillian, Ann, 197
- Johnny Darling Show, The* [TV], 94-5
- Johnson, Arte, 197
- Johnson, Katie, 58
- Jones, Disley, 163-4
- Jones, Jennifer, 33, 51
- Jones, Kenneth V, 72
- Jones, Pam *see* Pamela Addis
- Jones, Tom, 151, 156, 177
- Julien, Michael, 72
- Justice, James Robertson, 30
- Kael, Pauline, 32
- Kamp, Irene and Louis, 168
- Kantor, Jay, 134
- Karlin, Miriam, 97
- Kass, Ron, 151, 180
- Katz, Ray, 158, 166, 170, 179, 184, 189-94, 198
- Kaye, Danny, 10, 170-1
- Kaye, Nora, 129
- Kaye, Stubby, 138
- Kellerman, Sally, 203
- Kelly, Gene, 101, 171
- Kelly, Sean, 64
- Kennedy, Bobby, 132
- Kenny, Sean, 85-6, 100, 107, 117, 137
- Kenwright, Bill, 15, 210, 215, 226-7
- Kenwright, Tom, 226
- Kerr, Bill, 163
- Kerr, Walter, 100, 122
- Keyes, Colin, 226
- Kidd, Michael, 171
- Killers of Kilimanjaro, The (Adamson of Africa)* [film], 68-9, 72
- King, Alan, 15, 173, 175-6, 222, 233
- King's Head Theatre, London, 212-3
- Kirby, George, 20-2, 30, 36, 150, 160-2, 166-7, 185
- Kirby, Nell, 20, 161-2, 167
- Knight, Peter, 112
- Knight, Rosalind, 15, 146
- Korman, Harvey, 197
- Kreski, Connie, 145-6, 148
- Kretzmer, Herbert, 15, 98, 135, 138, 140-1, 168, 185-6, 204, 226-7
- Krimsky, John, 53-4
- Kristofferson, Kris, 198
- Lady is a Square, The* [film], 60-1
- Lakes, The* [TV], 228, 230
- Lang, Philip J, 117
- Langton, Diane, 213
- Lapsley, Anthony, 221
- Last Man to Hang, The* [film], 49, 114
- Lauden, Gerry, 64-6
- Lawford, Peter, 124, 131-2
- Lawrence, Steve, 171, 197
- Le Mesurier, John, 49, 59, 94
- Lean, David, 30-2, 36, 42, 206-7
- Lee, Bernard, 49, 59
- Lee, Christopher, 15, 49
- Lees, Jeremy, 15, 36, 38-40, 211
- Leigh, Vivien, 106
- Lemmon, Jack, 58
- Leonard, Fat Jack, 102
- Lerner, Alan Jay, 111, 127
- Let's Get Married / Confessions* [film], 73-4
- Levy, Franklin R, 171
- Liff, Samuel 'Biff', 15, 117-8, 119-21, 123, 192
- Lillie, Beatrice, 80-1, 85
- Lipton, Michael, 15, 55-6, 100, 102-3, 105-6
- Little Ballerina, The* [film], 29
- Little, Rich, 175, 200
- Livesy, Roger, 30
- Lodge, David, 15, 45, 64, 66-8
- Lom, Herbert, 59
- Loss, Joe, 71
- Lowndes, Victor, 136, 145-6
- Lynch, Kenny, 15, 78-9
- Lynn, Ann, 14, 43-4, 48, 49-51, 53-7, 61-3, 71-2, 89-90, 95, 103-4, 137
- Lynne, Gillian, 15, 113-4, 117-21, 168-9, 197, 227-8
- Lyric Theatre Hammersmith, London, 48, 204
- Maddern, Victor, 45
- Madeleine* [film], 36
- Maibaum, Richard, 57, 60, 62, 68

STOP THE WORLD

- Malden, Karl, 197
Man Inside, The [film], 60, 64
 Mancini, Henry, 171, 175, 226
 Mandell, Robert, 163
 Mankowitz, Wolf, 101
 Mans, Johnny, 15, 210
 Mantovani, 89
 Marceau, Marcel, 86
 Mardi, Danielle ('Tink'), 156-7, 202, 206, 216, 223
 Marealle, Thomas, 69
 Martin, Dick, 15, 177, 225
 Mason, Herbert, 43
 Massey, Daniel, 106
 Mate, Rudolph, 48
 Mather, Dorothy, 40-1, 43
 Mature, Victor, 60, 62-3, 101
 McCallum, John, 35
 McCulloch, Hazel, 15, 225, 229
 McDowall, Roddy, 197
 McGovern, Jimmy, 228
 McHugh, Bobby, 78
 McKenzie, Master Mike, 15, 211-2, 215
 Mendleson, Anthony, 163-4
 Mengers, Sue, 153
 Merrick, David, 87, 99-101, 103, 105-7, 113, 115, 117-22, 165
 MGM Studios, 59, 136
 Michel, Keith, 109, 111, 218
Mike Douglas Show, The [TV], 174
 Milland, Ray, 59
 Mills, John, 44, 206
 Minelli, Liza, 91, 132, 148, 186, 204
 Miss World Beauty Pageant, 177
 Mitchell, Joni, 132
 Mitchell, Warren, 97
 Mitchum, Robert, 58
 Mittelman, Arnold, 208
 Monkees, The, 89
 Monley, Eva, 69
 Monro, Matt, 118
 Moore, Dudley, 113
 Moore, Roger, 124, 171
 More, Julian, 15, 90
 Morley, Robert, 113, 197
 Morris, Frances Grace, 18, 19
 Morrison, Van, 89
 Moss, Jerry, 124
 Mostel, Zero, 107, 122
Mr Quilp [film], 168-70, 208, 217
 Mulvein, Graham, 215, 220
 Murray, Bianca, 28
 Murray, Chick, 67
 Neagle, Anna, 60-1
 Nederlander, James, 162, 189, 192-4
 Nelson, Willie, 198
 Nerina, Nadia, 47
 New Squadronaires, The, 210
 New Watergate Theatre Club, London, 46-7
 Newcombe, Pat, 129
 Newhart, Bob, 15, 175-8, 225
 Newley, Adelaide, 23-4, 26-7, 30-1, 34, 150
 Newley, Alexander 'Sacha' Anthony, 14, 123, 131, 137, 143, 150, 152, 161, 164, 168, 171, 179-80, 185, 187, 200, 206, 231, 233
 Newley, Anthony,
 as actor, 29, 31-2, 40, 43, 58-63, 66, 134, 191, 205
 as director, 86, 113-5, 119, 145, 153-4, 198, 227
 as pop star, 33, 66-7, 69-71, 73-9, 210
 as writer, 36, 41, 51, 64, 81-2, 87, 94, 109-11, 115, 122, 134-5, 160, 168, 173
 attitude to money, 10, 34, 37, 45, 63, 158, 166
 attitude to performing, 33, 46, 86-7, 112, 174-5, 177-8
 awards, 69, 92, 100, 107, 122, 166, 180
 birth, 18, 21
 cabaret, 122, 148-51, 155-6, 173-9, 188, 194, 200, 220, 222, 225
 children, 55-6, 104, 107-8, 123, 131, 137, 143, 152, 167, 180-1, 185, 195
 death, 13, 232
 depression, 152-3, 194, 195, 199, 202, 206, 222
 diary entries, 31, 33, 35, 202-3
 divorces, 95, 103-4, 152, 206
 drugs, 156, 176
 eccentric behaviour, 63, 155, 175, 179
 education, 26, 28
 evacuation, 23-5
 homes, 17-8, 23-4, 34, 39, 43-4, 56, 110, 117, 123-4, 131, 150, 156, 181, 184-7, 194, 201-2, 208, 214
 illness, 40, 169, 196-7, 222, 224-5
 marriages, 50, 104-5, 125, 148, 184
 National Service, 37-8
 pen names, 41, 77, 79
 performance style, 54, 134
 prison sentence, 51-3
 psychoanalysis, 148, 152, 156
 relationships, 33, 43-4, 48-50, 56-7, 61-2, 71, 74, 83, 141-3, 157

INDEX

- reviews, 32, 46, 54, 59-62, 73, 88-9, 100,
 115, 122, 149-50, 165, 169-70, 192-3,
 205-6, 208-9, 213-4, 223
 search for father, 36, 79, 150, 160-1
 spirituality, 140, 156, 200
 Newley, Arthur 'JanJan', 18-23
 Newley, Christopher Tyler, 14, 185, 195-6,
 202-3, 220, 222, 229-30
 Newley, Dareth Rich, 14, 158-60, 162-3,
 167-9, 173-5, 179-80, 182-5, 187, 192,
 194-6, 198-201, 204, 206, 214, 223, 228-9,
 231-2
 Newley, Edgar, 18-9, 21
 Newley, Frances Grace (Gracie), 9, 14, 18-25,
 31, 34, 37, 50-1, 53, 75, 84, 117, 131, 136,
 156, 158, 160-2, 166-7, 176, 196, 201-4,
 206, 208, 214, 217-8, 220-2, 228, 231
 Newley, Mabel, 19, 21, 23
 Newley, Shelby Pandora, 14, 167, 173, 180-1,
 185, 194-6, 201, 214, 219, 221, 229-31
 Newley, Simon, 55-6, 137
 Newley, Tara Cynara, 14, 107-9, 115, 118, 131,
 137, 143, 150, 152, 161, 164, 168, 180, 185,
 187, 217, 229, 231
 Newley, Victor, 14, 18, 19, 21-4
 Newley, Winifred, 14, 19, 21-3
 Newman, Joanne, 100, 123, 131
 Newman, Paul, 100, 123, 131, 133
 Newmar, Julie, 101
 Newton, Robert, 31, 43
 Niarchos, Charlotte Ford, 152
 Niven, David, 171
No Time to Die see *Tank Force*
 Novak, Kim, 101

 O'Connor, Des, 166
 O'Connor, Donald, 124, 197
 Ohman, Dorothy, 15, 179, 225
Oliver Twist [film], 30-2, 34-5, 37, 39, 93, 207
 Olivier, Laurence, 78, 90, 97
 Onassis, Aristotle, 132
Once Upon A Song [musical], 208-9, 212-4
 Orbach, Jerry, 132
 Orndel, Cyril, 101
Our Man Townsend [musical], 41, 59, 77
Outrage [TV film], 198

 Paar, Jack, 101
 Paddick, Hugh, 94
 Palance, Jack, 60
 Pappas, Bunny, 15, 151-2, 155-6, 158, 181

 Patrick, Nigel, 58, 60
 Pescud, George Cornille, 24-5, 28, 136
 Peters, Bernadette, 175
 Peterson, Oscar, 89
 Philips, Sian, 210
 Pilgrim Films, 34
 Pinewood Studios, 43
 Piper, John, 46
 Plakson, Suzie, 15, 198-9
 Playboy Club, 144
 Plummer, Christopher, 126
 Poitier, Sidney, 126-7
 Pol, Talitha, 77
Polly Comin' Home [TV film], 207-8
Port Afrique [film], 48
 Powell, Michael, 49
 Powers, Stefanie, 170
 Praverman, Len, 64-6
 Pressburger, Emeric, 49
 Preston, Robert, 198
 Prince Of Wales Theatre, London, 90-1, 166
 Profumo Scandal, 106
 Prowse, Juliet, 171, 175

 Quadrant Films, 170
 Quayle, Anna, 15, 85, 88, 94, 96, 100, 107, 178
 Quayle Anthony, 49
 Queen's Theatre, London, 88, 91, 100, 198, 204
 Quilley, Denis, 210

 Rae, Andrew, 78
 Rainbow and Stars, New York, 223
 Randle, Frank, 40
 Rank, J Arthur, 36
 Rank Organisation, The, 29-30, 34, 36-7, 39,
 43-4, 60
 Rashad, Phylcia, 208
 Raucher, Herman, 15, 133-5, 138, 143, 147, 150,
 179, 195, 230
 Raucher, M K, 15, 179
 Raulston, Alf, 163
 Rawls, Lou, 171
 Raye, Martha, 197
 Reader's Digest, The, 168
 Reagan, Ronald, 132
Red Peppers [TV], 210-11
 Reed, Shanna, 207
 Reeves, Kynaston, 30, 59
 Reinitis, Rex, 71
 Rhodes, George, 182-3
 Rhodes, Marjorie, 41

STOP THE WORLD

- Rich, Dareth *see* Dareth Rich Newley
Richard III [never completed musical], 11, 215, 217, 227
 Richer, Jeff, 213
 Ritchard, Cyril, 117, 121-2
 Rivers, Joan, 174-5
 Rix, Brian, 15, 43
Roar of the Greasepaint - The Smell of the Crowd, *The* [musical], 10, 109-15, 117-23, 164-5, 192
 Roberts, Rachel, 125, 128
 Robeson, Paul, 67
 Rogers, Noel, 117
 Rolling Stones, The, 132
Rookery Nook [play], 40
 Rosenstock, Milton, 99, 103
 Ross, Annie, 15, 47-8, 53-5, 218
 Ross, Herb, 15, 124, 129-30, 191-2
 Ross, Stanley Ralph, 188-93
 Rubin, Ronald, 138

 Salinger, Pierre, 131
 Saltzman, Harry, 110
 Sam S Shubert Theatre, New York, 100, 101, 103, 105, 118, 141, 149, 183
Sammy [TV], 61, 72, 94
 Savalas, Telly, 197
 Schaefer, George, 192
 Scharf, Walter, 154
 Schlesinger, John, 15, 153
School for Scandal, The [play], 40
 Schwarzman, Jack, 158
 Scott, Peter Graham, 73
Scrooge [musical], 10-11, 13, 215-6, 218-24
 Seal, Judy, 136, 145
 Secombe, Harry, 14, 101
 Selby, Robert, 15, 62
 Sellers, Peter, 64, 77, 106, 135, 171
 Selway, Mary, 42
Seventh Veil, The [play], 40
 Shaw, David, 60
 Shaw, Susan, 34
 Sheldon, Sydney, 195
 Sheridan, Dinah, 40
 Shiner, Ronald, 41, 43
 Shore, Dinah, 174
 Shubert Theatre *see* Sam S Shubert Theatre
 Sibley, Antoinette, 47
Simon and Simon [TV], 194
 Sinatra, Frank, 91, 132, 150, 173, 186
 Sinden, Donald, 44

 Slade, Julian, 15, 89-90
Small World of Sammy Lee, The [film], 97-8, 101, 107
 Smith, Gary, 170
 Smith, Keith, 77, 211
 Smith, Sally, 117
 Smuin, Michael, 15, 189-92
Song and Dance Man, The [TV], 124
Sonny and Cher Show, The [TV], 174
 Spencer, Lou, 151
 Springfield, Dusty, 89
 St Martin's Theatre, London, 46
Stagecoach [TV film], 198
 Stamp, Terence, 102, 124
 Standing, John, 15, 195, 210
 Stapleton, Jean, 171
 Stark, Ray, 124
 Starr, Ringo, 197
 Steadman, Alison, 215
 Steele, Tommy, 78, 147, 163
 Stephens, Robert, 97
 Stewart, Hugh, 43
 Stone, Paddy, 163
Stop the World - I Want to Get Off [musical (and film)], 9-11, 81-96, 99-102, 107, 111-2, 114-5, 118, 122, 137, 141, 161, 164-5, 182-3, 198-9, 203-6
 Stork Club, 102
Strange World of Gurney Slade, The [TV], 74, 79, 81, 94, 217
Streetcar Named Desire, A [play], 40
 Streisand, Barbra, 131-2, 135-6, 147, 149, 154, 173
 Stuart, Mel, 154
Summertree [film], 153-4
 Susskind, David, 192-4
 Sutton, Julia, 163, 166
Sweet November [film], 10, 130, 133-4, 154
 Swift, David, 15, 184, 195-7, 202
 Swift, Micheline, 184, 186, 195-6, 202

Tank Force [film], 60
 Tanner, Tony, 15, 96
 Tarrant, Alan, 74
Tattletales [TV], 174
 Taubman, Howard, 100, 122
 Taylor, Ken, 73
 Taylor, Robert, 68-9
 Tenille, Toni, 174
 Thomas, David, 203
 Thorpe, Richard, 68

INDEX

- Those People Next Door* [film], 41
Three Coins in the Fountain [TV film], 207
 'Tink' see Danielle Mardi
 Tomson, Bob, 15, 215-6, 218-21
Tonight At 8:30 [TV], 210-11
Tonight Show [TV], 101
 Tony Awards, 107, 122
Top of the Form [film], 41
 Tormé, Mel, 89
 Trent, John, 170
 Tuchner, Michael, 168
 Twentieth Century Fox, 123, 125-6, 130
 Tynan, Kenneth, 88, 100

 Universal Pictures, 134, 145, 149
Up to His Neck [film], 43
Upper Hand, The [TV], 217
 Ustinov, Peter, 30, 32

 Vaccaro, Brenda, 15, 153-4
 Van Dyke, Jerry, 175
 Van Heusen, Jimmy, 72, 91
 Variety Club of Great Britain, The, 69-70
 Vaughan, Frankie, 60-1, 165, 226
 Vaughan, Sarah, 118
 Vernon, Gilbert, 46, 54
 Vernon, Richard, 40
Vice Versa [film], 30-3, 37, 43, 93, 169
Victor/Victoria [musical], 226
 Vin\cent, Peter, 227
 Vokes, Helen, 28, 35
 Vosburgh, Beryl, 15, 42, 56
 Vosburgh, Bill 'Bones', 15, 179, 188-9, 193, 198-9, 202, 206, 214-5
 Vosburgh, Dick, 15, 42, 53, 77-8, 227
Vote for Huggett [film], 34

 Wagner, Robert J, 93, 131
Waiting for Godot [play], 215
 Walker, Chris, 15, 217
 Walsh, Kay, 30
 Warden, Jack, 153, 197
 Warner Bros, 130
 Warner, David, 168
 Warner, Jack, 34-5, 41
 Warner, Jack (USA), 124

 Warwick, Dionne, 175
 Warwick Films, 45-6, 50-3, 56-64, 66, 68-9, 71-4, 76-7, 97, 101, 113, 210
 Washbourne, Mona, 168
 Watts, Alan, 200
 Weissberger, Arnold, 105
 Wharmby, Tony, 15, 207
 'What Kind of Fool Am I?' [song], 87, 90-2, 99, 111-2, 150, 178, 204-5, 217
 Whitelock, Trafford, 42
 'Who Can I Turn To?' [song], 111-2, 114, 118, 178
 Wilcox, Herbert, 60-1
 Wilder, Gene, 15, 154
 Wilding, Michael, 63
 Wilk, Alan and Lynn, 195
 Williams, Andy, 74, 122, 125, 150
 Williams, Bevan, 40
 Williams, Esther, 195
 Williams, Joe, 151
 Wills, Anneke, 15, 74-5, 79, 83, 85, 93-5, 108, 137, 145
 Wills, Polly (Gough), 104, 108, 137
Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory [film], 10, 154, 165, 171
 Wilson, Sandy, 89
Winds of Heaven [play], 29
 Winters, Bernie, 64, 72, 75
 Winters, Mike, 75
 Winters, Shelley, 197
 Wisdom, Norman, 15, 113-5
 Wittop, Freddy, 117
 Wolper, David, 154-5, 171
 Woods, Aubrey, 15, 155
 Wood, Natalie, 131
 Wooland, Norman, 63
 Writers Guild of Great Britain, 149

X the Unknown [film], 49

 Young, Terence, 57, 62

 Zanuck, Dick, 126
Zarak [film], 62-3
 Zec, Donald, 62, 146